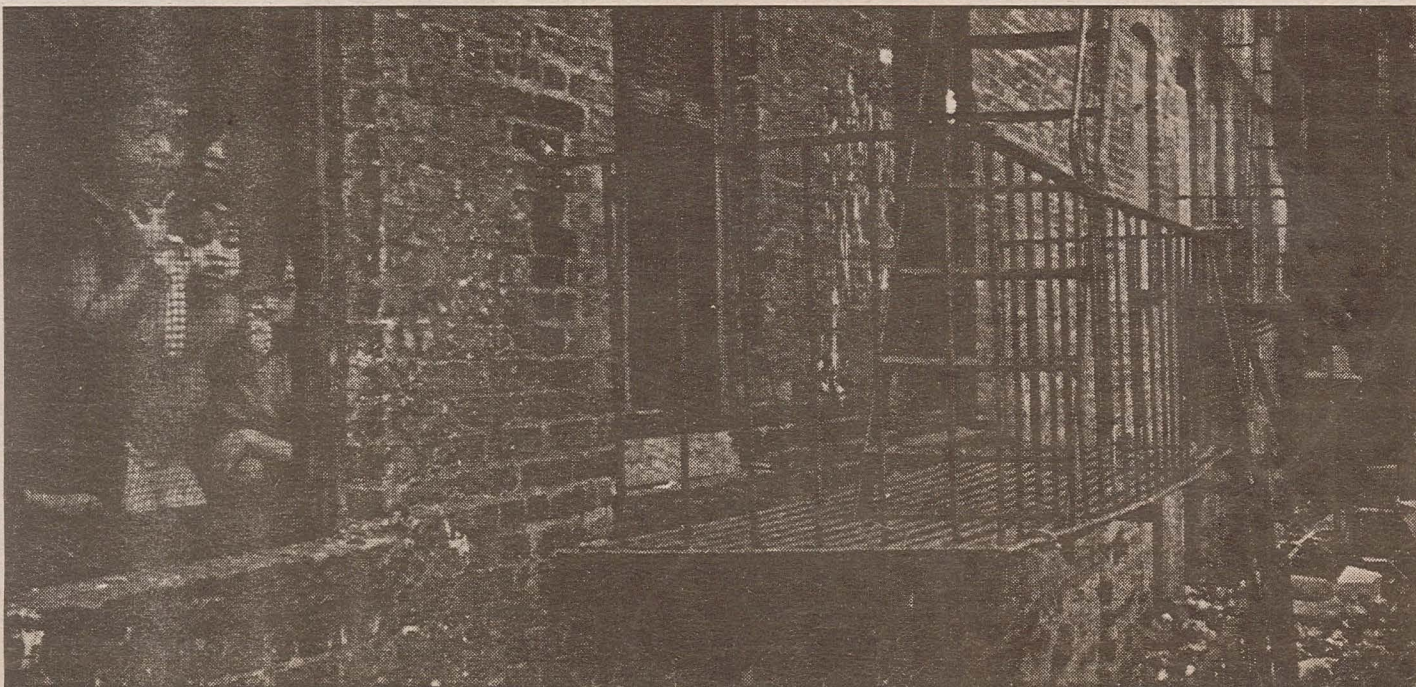


COMMEMORATOR

Volume 5 , Number 2

May-June 1995

New Poverty Statistics: *Organizers Redouble Efforts for Change*



In 1993, African American children in families were nearly three times as likely as White children (46 percent versus 17 percent) to live in poverty. The median income of African American families was not significantly different in 1969 than it was in 1993 (about \$21,550). White family income in 1993 (\$39,310), on the other hand, was 9 percent higher than in 1969. With the 30-year Commemoration of the formation of the BPP coming up, it is most appropriate for us to recommit ourselves to the 10-point program of the Party.

Shabazz Sting Brings Dismissal

The government delivered a May Day present to Louis Farrakhan of the Nation of Islam in the form of dismissal of charges against Qubilah Shabazz, daughter of the late Malcolm X, in return for the endorsement by her mother, Betty Shabazz, who up until her daughter's indictment had been outspoken in her opinion that Mr. Farrakhan had been responsible in her husband's assassination, and who agreed to introduce Mr. Farrakhan to her husband's Harlem constituency by appearing jointly with him at a fund-raiser at the Apollo Theater May 6.

Sources on the defense side claimed the government's case was "weak." William Kuntsler, one of Shabazz's attorneys, claimed the move was an attempt by the government to save face. The sole witness against Ms. Shabazz was Michael Fitzpatrick, a government informant, who was alleged to have entrapped Ms. Shabazz and who has since received \$40,000 from the FBI. The Reverend Calvin Butts, Minister of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York's Harlem said, "We don't think anything about this is fair. This was contrived to discredit the

Shabazz family and Malcolm X." It has been reported that outside the courtroom after the agreement was signed, Ms. Shabazz said that her statement was coerced and that she was under a great deal of pressure during the FBI interview.

"The only loser is the memory of Malcolm X," said one observer who requested anonymity. "Farrakhan gets all this positive publicity, the government avoids a cause célèbre, the informant avoids a difficult situation and Shabazz gains her liberty."

"People don't realize how easily the government sets people up," said Melvin Dickson, Editor of the *Commemorator*. "We have been victims of this kind of sting operation throughout our history as Panthers. The late Chicago Panther leader, Fred Hampton's son is in jail, dozens including Geronimo ji Jaga Pratt, are serving time on spurious charges where informants and agents were used to set up, kill, provoke or give false testimony against black leadership. Mumia Abu Jamal faces execution under the very same circumstance.

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Photo by Collier's Yearbook

Figures recently published in the establishment press show that not only does the United States have the greatest gap between the rich and the poor, but that gap is greater than it has ever been and is widening at the most rapid rate ever; and it is accelerating. Government statistics reflected in its own press state that 1% of the U.S. population owns 40% of its wealth. The government itself owns 60% of the land of the nation. Tax laws and loopholes, discriminating prosecution, unemployment, low wage service work, fictitious capital and lack of organization are some of the reasons experts have given for these trends. The effect on minorities in the nation is most devastating, since those groupings are traditionally among the last hired and first fired, among the lowest paid, and are witnessing an end to government protections and affirmative hiring programs.

"Entire housing projects are unemployed"

"Entire housing projects are unemployed," said Dr. Mark Levine of San Francisco. "Not a single person in them is working. There is no way they can pay their rent or survive without government stipends, and there is no work for them even in government workfare programs. So they hustle for a buck wherever they can, and they are always in trouble with the law."

In New York City, on April 30 Mayor Giuliani gave notice to the one in seven on welfare, mostly black and minorities, that the city will no longer support them. He is hoping they will leave. But most have no resources with which to, and no particular place to go. In remarks critics have called "coldly callous," the mayor stated their removal would be a good thing regardless of where

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Qubilah Shabazz, daughter of El Hajj Malik El Shabazz (Malcolm X)

Photo by UPI

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Editorials

Three Strikes and You're In, But It Takes More to Win

California's tough "three strikes and you're out" legislation, which has been copied in other states across the nation, finally seems to be convincing defendants in felony cases to get tough themselves. Reports from that state's judiciary indicate its felony defendants, mostly poor minorities, are refusing to accept plea bargains and demanding to go to trial. The result — the state has not the resources in judges, courtrooms, lawyers, stenographers, prison cells to try them while conducting civil cases and misdemeanors and so is cutting back on the latter. The indication is that the further spread of this movement will make the state reassess its stance because it cannot afford to pay for more trial facilities and will eventually fall behind in its ability to try felony cases, to the point where speedy trial requirements are breached.

While a monied-man like O.J. Simpson has a half-dozen lawyers and a courtroom to himself for six months at a time, the impecunious defendant gets one public defender

who presses him to negotiate with the government who is holding him under conditions where plea bargaining generally means taking what the government offers to get out of the rigors of "bull-pen therapy," including the denial of reasonable bails. Every assertion of rights, every added day of judicial attention adds to the proposed sentence. Reports from the prison system indicate sentences after trial are often at least double the government's plea bargain offer, although sentences in general (99% of them negotiated) are still the longest in the entire world (with the possible exception of the post-Communist Soviet Union). Individual resistance seems pointless; and as the case of Lester Hamilton shows (reported this issue), reliance on the good will of government employees who make their living through one or another form of neo-slavery, does not guarantee any better treatment. Guilt or innocence, right or wrong, does not enter into the question. Those in charge are on

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Privatization— The Dog That Bites

Conclusion

While contracting municipal services can look like a saving of tax dollars, it's a net loss to taxpayers. Unions are broken, wages slashed, and businesses close as consumers have less money to spend. Minority communities are among the hardest hit. The money does go to outside companies that get the contracts — even garbage contracts are being dominated by national and international conglomerates, which then warn neighborhood recycling groups they will be sued if they infringe on the contracting company's monopoly. The money does not go back into the community, as government employee wages generally do. Private companies will bid for the most rewarding contracts, while leaving services that cost more and provide less return untouched. These then become a burden on taxpayers, who are really subsidizing the contractors.

When the actual *authority* of the state is contracted to private, profit-making corporations, the last pretense of government "by the people" is literally sold to the lowest bidder.

Take prisons for instance: the rapidly expanding correctional industry is making record profits for

multinational corporations, as well as providing a way that federal, state, and county governments can cash in. They cannot build new prisons and jails fast enough. The "Three-Strikes-and-You're-Out" law has paved the way to guarantee that the money for more prisons and jails are high priorities of government. It was bad enough to have a sworn officer of the government in physical control of you in prison, but now the man or woman wielding the baton, or holding the gun, is merely a hired gun, an employee of a corporation whose bottom line is not public protection but profit margin. Prior issues details a few of the people who have literally died as a result, although they were sentenced, not to death, but to a few years in prison and then released back to their families.

Public services in private hands are private services dispensed with at the convenience of its owners. This leaves the public, which once counted on those services, uncertain if they can obtain them, uncertain if they can use this individual's, or groups of individuals: school systems, health establishments, libraries, private bridges, streets, waterways, land, air-space, airwaves, ports, railways, bus or transport systems, utilities (light, gas, water), telecommunications systems (phones), legal establishments, etc. A public with no secure

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When Insanity Rules the Courtroom

Somewhere on their way to court certain attorneys of an historically progressive persuasion, caught up in questions of "insanity," a legal term meaning the ability of a person to do injury to themselves or others, lose their minds. (Temporarily, we hope). Upon review of a criminal trial where a black man accused of mass murder determined to defend himself at trial by the state; something that criminal defendants, especially those of a political persuasion, are wont to do, they announced the defense itself insane after the judge pronounced the man fit to stand trial, and, while attacking the judge over his determination on appeal, attacked the constitutional rights of defendants to represent themselves in court in the establishment press, asserting the propriety of that representation should be judged on the basis of the opinions of court-appointed psychiatrists, the level of skill and legal training of the defendant, his personality traits and the quality of his proposed defense.

Images abound of Bobby Seale bound and gagged before Judge Hoffman because he demanded the trial await the recovery of his own

stricken attorney and the judge would not permit the sound of his voice in protest in his courtroom.

In a judicial system as patently prejudiced against minorities and the poor as ours, where minorities are herded to jail, held without bail, sentenced in numbers and for periods greater than any other nation, provided with second-class defense resources and railroaded into plea bargains where all the leverage belongs on the prosecution's side, we believe the absolute right to self-representation in criminal and civil cases is critical to the protection of the life and safety of the individual.

Clients are supposed to direct legal cases, not attorneys. Attorneys are agents who hold a fiduciary duty to their clients. They are not the principals — they don't have to do the prison time. All we are seeing here is the operation of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes' maxim that hard cases make bad law. Let's not make matters worse by doing the reactionaries' work for them. If a defendant has lost his mind, let's not lose ours.

Opinions and positions taken in articles with bylines are those of their writers. The views expressed in the bylined editorial and opinion pieces published by The Commemorator do not necessarily indicate its endorsement or support. —The Editor

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OP-ED

Death Penalty: A Problem for the Poor A Solution for the Rich



Electric Chair, increasingly the Final Solution for the rich in dealing with the poor.

by Commemorator Staff

The vast majority of people on death row have nothing to lose but their lives; they are the poor working class types. Others are poor also but, are mentally retarded, insane, mere children, and mentally and emotionally defective in some way or other. The death penalty does not work on these people who are often self-destructive and won't live very long anyway.

However, there is a class of criminals who could be deterred from criminal behavior because they do enjoy social rewards for which life is worth living.

Consider the Ford Motor Company. It designed a car, the Pinto, that exploded if rear-ended and incinerated the people inside. So Ford made the mathematical calculation that eighteen people would be killed each year and it would cost them X dollars to pay the settlement and alternatively it would cost them Y dollars to fix the car. Because X is less than Y they go ahead, leaving the car as it is and — eighteen people are murdered by Ford.

Then there were the executives of a drug company that widely distributed a form of birth control that maimed many of its users and killed more than a dozen. Or the board of directors at a company that squelched studies of the cancer-causing qualities of its asbestos products. Or high government officials who

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187 Who's Next?

(Editor's note: the following article begins with incidents of harassment which our staff believes to be the consequence of the negative propaganda and hysteria that the proponents of 187 have been putting forth. Names have been withheld for fear of repercussions from the INS.)

by Michele Uribe

In Manteca, California police stopped two young women, who are legal residents of the U.S., for jaywalking; the police then drove them to an INS office fourteen miles away.

In Stanislaus County, California an owner of a hotel called the police when an American citizen of Mexican descent would not show a green card upon registering.

Finally, in New York state, Senator Frank Padavan proposed a series of bills in "the spirit of Proposition 187." The legislation would stop undocumented immigrants from receiving all but emer-

gency health care, deny welfare benefits and prevent them from enrolling in city and state colleges. It would also require police to check the status of people suspected of being in the country unlawfully.

Nationwide immigrant advocates are waging a tireless effort to resist 187. Students attending UC Berkeley have formed a coalition demanding that the chancellor implement a policy of noncompliance with Proposition 187. In Chicago, 400 residents marched through the community of "Little Village," a largely Mexican community, to protest 187. The next day in Dallas 500 activists gathered in the City Hall Plaza to rally in support of immigrant rights. Esperanza "Pinky" Gonzales of Grupo Apoyo Imigrantes Latinos Americanos, in realizing the need for aggressive action stated, "Prop 187 was a wake-up call and it woke up a great big giant and it's getting bigger all the time."

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Murdered by the State

Murder by the state is supposed to make the neighborhood safe. Murder by the state is supposed to deter murder, so we won't be murdered by each other. So finally as the town becomes peaceful only the state is the murderer in an ideal society. A black man who kills a white dies. A poor man who kills a rich man probably dies. A white man kills and he may be punished in a prison or on a golf course. If he's rich his hands can be covered with blood but they will be rinsed off, and his fingernails manicured. If a wife or husband is killed in a rage, the rage will have its own being and be unable to hear cries for help. Or a burglar challenged by his prey will shoot to kill for is he not a witness to his burglary crime? A dead victim can testify in no court. A society can be addicted to violence and murder by the state is a splendid, a legal form of violence. Then in days to come those in power will hire millions of police in every city, to staff the prisons, press buttons on gas chambers, gallows and electric chairs, and find everyone in the city guilty of crying too loud for help,

crying for work or shelter, for health, crying for love — all these are capital crimes, without enough gas chambers to go around, so still more police will be needed to punish blacks, Latinos and other dispossessed who do not belong on golf courses and who cry too loud. "But capital punishment at least deters murder," they say. Maybe on Mars or Venus, not on Earth. States with capital punishment have murder rates as high or higher than those without. Murder occurs in poverty, in rage, among drug dealers who find no other work. And the greatest murders of all are those that flow from corporate decisions in the workplaces, the fields, the mountains and the mines, or through the poisons on our breakfast tables. The lives of millions have been taken this way, and no corporation ever went to the gas chamber, no board of directors has been hanged on gallows, no university president or U.S. Senator has had his eyeballs explode with 1500 volts in his government's electric chair, in spite of millions dead in silence — as the earth itself sickens and is dragged toward silence, our weeping mother earth, the one they have raped and pillaged for centuries.

April 15, 1995,

...And the Poor Get Killed

Death penalty provisions are sweeping the country as proffered palliative for the day-to-day punishment sustained by the man in the street. Often justified as a deterrent, execution provides a location for blame and a reassurance the government is not completely powerless in a society in crisis. But what about the victims? They are generally poor people who could not afford a good attorney to give them a good defense at trial; who had no money to bring sympathetic witnesses to court; they were recent immigrants or strangers in the community where they were tried under circumstances where the

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Letters to the Editor

Expose the establishment press

Dear *Commemorator*:

I like your paper a lot, but I wish you could attack the establishment press in the country more. They lie, they lie, they lie. The press works with the government and says what the government wants the people to hear. Society is crumbling and they are trying to maintain the "status quo" by keeping the truth from the people. This must be exposed; they must be attacked. It is said that in times of war truth is the first casualty, but as a war of liberation for the people we must uphold and advance the truth. Thank you *Commemorator* for doing your part; let us all do "our duty."

I have seen the future and it works! To victory!

Malik Muhammed Azeem
New York, NY

Where do we begin

To *The Commemorator* Staff,

I write to you from "the city of brotherly love," also known as the police brutality capital of the world—

Shabbazz

Continued from page 1

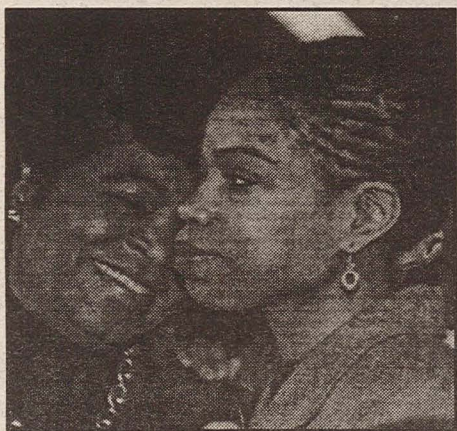


Photo by UPI

FBI's main purpose for the entrapment of Qubilah Shabazz, is to undermine the historic legacy and relevance of her father.

"Now, President Clinton is seeking broader powers and the FBI is saying they are going to investigate people and place informants within organizations whether they have any 'reasonable indications' of possible criminal activity or not. There is not even a standard that would protect the people. While the government is infiltrating and destabilizing groupings in agreement with the philosophy of Brother Malcolm, and ensuring that his children cannot follow in his footsteps as leaders of the low-income and black communities, they are actively promoting those like Mr. Farrakhan who use government funds and will cooperate with them."

The Nation of Islam is a government contractor, providing security services for public housing projects in Chicago and other cities.

Philadelphia. I read every word of your paper as a student of its thought and conviction. I take notes, and try to study other themes that may not be familiar to me. I take from the lessons of Brother George Jackson and Brother Huey Newton who applied themselves in this way to learning, overcoming many difficulties — to fight to attain the confidence in our abilities to learn how to be masters of our own fate.

I offer a suggestion that I hope you will discuss in planning your future editions. There are many people who *want* to do things, to make a change, to fight the oppression that we feel and see around us. There are many who are so angry we can explode in any minute. There are many who see the tenseness in our communities and want to channel energies toward *positivity* not destruction. There are many of us who battle alcoholism and drugs and *the hold that has on us*, and will fight for something better. My suggestion is to put some *how-tos*, some practical suggestions that are *spelled out*. How do we start in doing something. Where do we begin, and how. Maybe we can hear from people who have gone the distance and have had success. I seek not only theoretical

clarity but practical certainty. I trust you understand. Though I am many miles away we are attuned and blessed with utter certainty that decency and dignity will prevail.

Keep your spirit high and continue to fight for the people, for a winning approach.

Joseph Brandon-McGee, Jr.
Philadelphia, PA

HUEY wanted the "Long Distance Runner"

A Message to *The Commemorator*:

Huey Newton would be so proud of *The Commemorator*! Why? Because when he was alive he was known as the baddest mother-f___ there was — because he put himself on the line, he stood up for the people against the man. But then some so-called "followers" of his leadership aped (mimicked) the imagery, the symbolic trappings. These so-called "followers" did not or would not understand that Huey would do whatever was necessary to fight and win; they wouldn't do the hard, tedious and unglamorous work. They instead were self-serving and sought fame

and glory for themselves. They wore the leather jackets the Black Panthers wore but inside they were fake and false. They were out for their own asses, their own skins and *not* for the people.

Huey despised this sloth. Huey wanted the "long-distance" fighters, not the here-today-and-gone-tomorrow people. I read a story once called "The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner" — if one is *not willing* to accept defeats, retreats, lack of the limelight or spotlight they are being unrealistic to what the "movement" faces. If, as Mao Tse Tung says, they are willing to merge their interests with the people they can be considered true revolutionaries.

Huey P. Newton would be proud of *The Commemorator* carrying the baton forward and not sinking or degenerating into a reunion club or a back-patting club. Let us continue to build with the ones who want to learn, with ones who will be serious, who can be led to understand the long, hard, bitter fights of the Panthers and we cannot make the same mistakes again.

Anonymous
New York

ATTENTION: A Historic Celebration

Were you a member of *The Black Panther Party* between the years of 1966 and 1980?

Well we would like to hear from you! We're planning the 30th reunion of the founding of *The Black Panther Party*, and your input is needed.

**Tentative Date: October 10 thru 13th 1996
in Oakland, California.**

We are making a nationwide search for former Panthers and Panther supporters. Call (510) 652-8828 or (916) 688-1996 and leave your name, address and phone numbers so that we can keep you informed of our planning progress. Please spell your names and addresses out completely.

thank you

THE COMMITTEE TO CELEBRATE THE FOUNDING OF THE BLACK
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We Welcome Your Letters

We appreciate hearing from our readers about the paper. We also want to know about what you are doing - the news from your community. All Power To The People.

The Commemoration Committee also has speakers available for presentations to your church, club, class or other group.

Write or call: (510) 652-8828
The Commemoration Committee
4432 Telegraph Avenue, P.O. Box #62
Oakland, CA 94609

NEW WAR AGAINST POVERTY

The goal of this section is to bring the oppressed communities and concerned people visual news of their struggles for liberation nationally and internationally—to highlight the class war and to tie together the many fronts of struggle (past and present) and to build intercommunal solidarity for real progressive change.

This photo collage and captions, like the regular articles we run, highlights struggles from many fronts: The fight for comprehensive health care for all; the fight for jobs with decent wages; the fight for housing and education for all; where we are winning and where we are losing the **New War Against Poverty**—against oppression.



BPP Newspaper

One hallmark of the Black Panther Party in the mid-1960s and early 1970s was the community-based food pantries and free breakfast programs for school children. These programs served tens of thousands of black and poor people across the country. They were a new and progressive step, toward building grassroots political organization — a bottom-up, community approach in building for the fight against economic exploitation and oppression for fundamental change. Dr. Huey P. Newton called them “survival programs” — “survival pending revolution” — analogous to a life raft that one uses when stranded on the seas. The goal is not to obtain a life raft but to reach the shore. The survival programs were never meant to be the solution to the problem of economic exploitation and oppression. Why?

The Commemorator would like to thank the following Bay Area businesses that are participating in the New War Against Poverty through a 10% discount to low-income customers who have signed-up with Western Service Workers Association.



-  **A.O.C. Video**, 1500 E. 14th Street
Oakland, CA., (510) 534-2270
-  **Basket Case Antiques**, 3400 66th Av. #3
Oakland, (510) 568-0902 (ask for Herman)
-  **Dave Anderson (Dazzling Do's)**, 2270 E. 14th St.
Oakland, CA, (510) 536-8955
-  **Discolandia Records & Tapes**, 2636 E. 14th St.
Oakland, CA., (510) 261-1520
-  **Earl's Beauty Supply**, 3228 Adeline Street
Berkeley, CA., (510) 652-8041
-  **Immaculate Auto Body**, 1430 14th. Street
Oakland CA., (510) 533-5742
-  **KFC**, 950 Market Street
Oakland, CA, (510) 763-3745

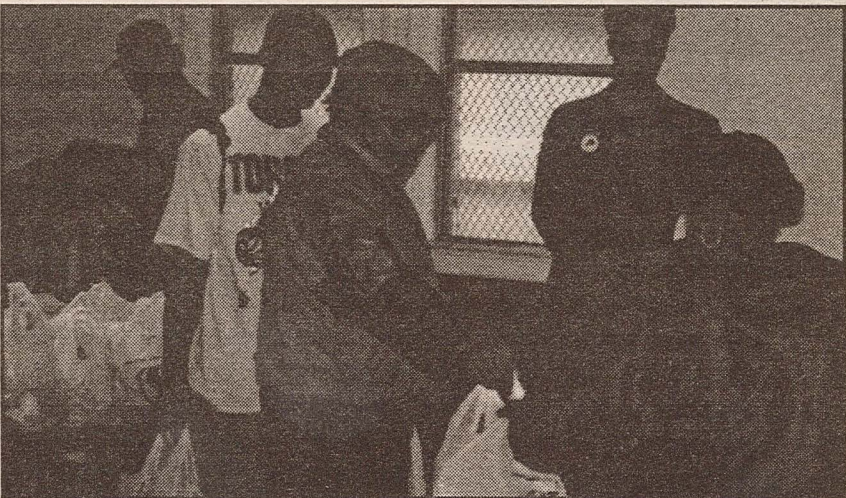


Photo by Kevin Churchill

If you want to build a survival program in your community contact the Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party. Staff of CCBPP participate in a free supplemental food distribution run by and for members of Western Service Workers Association in San Francisco, California.

Like the survival programs of the BPP, WSWA's supplemental food distribution is never put forward as a charity or handout or a solution to conditions of poverty, but as a means by which their members can survive and build the strength to fight for permanent change.



BPP Newspaper

Under the leadership of Huey Newton and Bobby Seale the Party understood that fundamental change was the goal — that is, the elimination of economic exploitation and oppression versus the institutionalization of poverty and charity approach to political problems. BPP's survival programs were not viewed by the low income community as some form of charity, but as part of a larger thrust for fundamental change that was mutually beneficial to both the working community and small businesses. The small businessmen in the black community who donated to the Party's free breakfast and food programs received the support of the black low-income community.

Today, this approach is needed more than ever, especially in light of the many attacks by the recent genocidal policies that have left our communities in economic and social decline. There is an urgent need to advance the concept of survival programs to oppressed communities around the country.

-  **L.A. Appliances**, 2631 Wallace Street
Oakland, CA, (510) 533-4559
-  **Linus Printing**, 1309 Franklin Street
Oakland, CA, (510) 268-9901
-  **Los Cocos Restaurant**, 1449 Fruitvale Avenue
Oakland, CA, (510) 536-3079
-  **Los Tres Amigos**, 2001 E. 14th Street
Oakland, CA., (510) 533-4175
-  **Romero Glass Studios**, 1825 E. 14th Street
Oakland, CA., (510) 533-1109
-  **Soledad Beauty Salon**, 2812 E. 14th Street
Oakland, CA., (510) 436-7449
-  **United Market**, 893 Willow Street
Oakland, CA, (510) 465-1568

One African-American Family's Experience with California's Courts and Prison System



Courtesy of Hamilton family

Lester Hamilton's beautiful family

By Commemorator Staff

Lester Hamilton was eight years old when he met his future wife, Phillis, and her family. She had two older brothers that were five and seven years older than him. Their friends were even older. Mr. Hamilton hung out with them. He would do anything to get in with them and gain their approval and their protection. He was the youngest in the group. Drinking was one of the things he did to be cool. As the years went by his drinking became a problem, and it got worse and worse. He started having blackouts; people would have to tell him what he had done the day or night before. His friends and relatives would say, "boy, you should stop drinking before you kill somebody or somebody kills you." He was young, hard-headed and didn't want to listen.

When Mr. Hamilton was 19 years old he had a job at a convalescent home that often required he work double shifts. He used to hide alcohol in the broom closets. He would work for about an hour or so and then go to the closet and take a sip.

On the night of May 23, 1972, Mr. Hamilton worked a double shift and had been drinking all day, stopping by his uncle's house for a few drinks after which a friend of his uncle drove him home. Phillis was fixing the children something to eat. Mr. Hamilton told her he would be right back and went to the store. When he could not start her car, he tried to prime the carburetor but it still wouldn't start. So he walked a couple of blocks to the liquor store and bought a half pint of vodka, went in the back of the store, in the parking lot where everyone hung out, sat on a milk crate and drank some more. Staggering home, he tried again to start the car and failed, primed the

carburetor, then took the gas can inside. He walked into the bedroom with the can, spilling it. He also had a cigarette in his mouth. Digging in his pocket, he pulled out his Zippo lighter, but dropped the lighter on the floor. All of a sudden Mr. Hamilton was on the floor on fire. Struggling, trying to get up off the floor, he ran outside and rolled around on the grass in the front yard. Meantime Phillis was running around trying to get to her three babies out of the house.

Mr. Hamilton passed out in the front yard. Upon awakening, he was stopped by a policeman, on the way into his house. The officer handcuffed him and placed him into an awaiting police vehicle. He had burns on his arms and legs. His daughter was burned on her neck, face, and back. His oldest son was burned on the bottom of his feet. His wife had burns over fifty percent of her body and their youngest son was killed.

Mr. Hamilton was charged with first degree murder. He was given a

Mr. Hamilton's friends and entire family were ashamed of him; they didn't try to help. They were sick and tired of his "drunkenness." But 23 years later, they can't believe that he's still in prison. His wife tried to hire an attorney from her hospital bed. The attorney told him that he shouldn't worry: the most he would get would be involuntary manslaughter, one year in county jail. But the attorney never appeared to represent Mr. Hamilton, because she didn't receive her fee; Mr. Hamilton's wife could only afford to give her fifty dollars. So he went to trial with a state-appointed public defender. He felt that the state's job was very easy. He didn't have the correct type of representation, wasn't in his right state of mind to correctly defend himself, and nobody seemed to care that he was telling the truth. At trial the state acted like Mr. Hamilton was lying about his drinking problem. The only trouble he had on his adult record consisted of two DUIs. The public defender didn't even try to

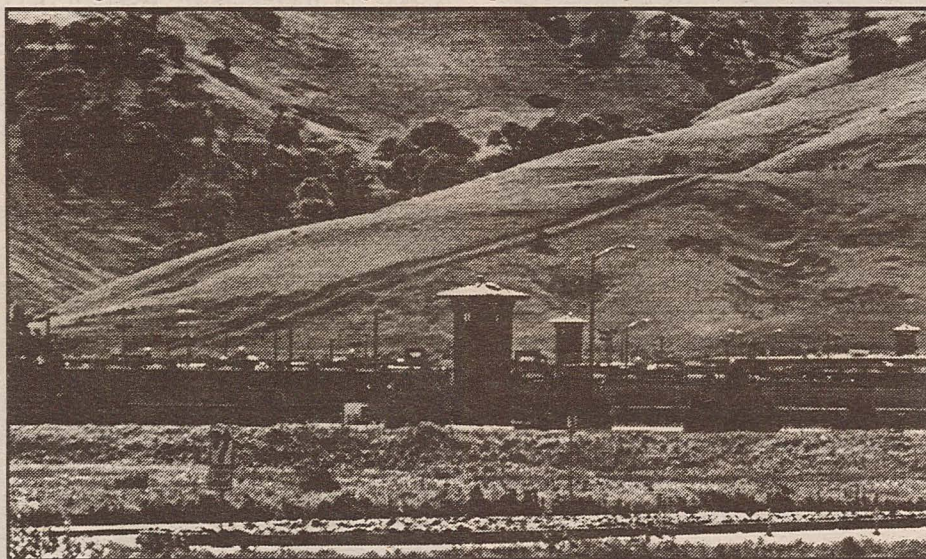


Photo by Kevin Churchill

Mr. Hamilton is currently imprisoned in the notorious Vacaville State Prison—his family has moved to Vacaville, California to be near him.

public defender and they didn't get along at all. Mr. Hamilton told him that he didn't want him to represent him; the attorney rejoined that he was going to represent him whether Mr. Hamilton liked it or not. Application to the Mormon judge to appoint another attorney was denied, but the denial was not recorded into the record for purposes of appeal. Mr. Hamilton was scared, inexperienced and young. He was devastated by the death of his son and serious injuries to family members, and represented by a lawyer defending his first capital case, who was looking for experience. Mr. Hamilton's misfortune was a great education to him.

defend Mr. Hamilton.

An investigator testified against Mr. Hamilton. He sat on the witness stand without a conscience and told what Mr. Hamilton swears was a boldfaced lie to the courtroom — and the entire world for that matter. The investigator said that Mr. Hamilton had told him that he and his wife had had an argument, so Mr. Hamilton got mad and killed the baby. Mr. Hamilton was shocked.

He was convicted and sentenced to life in prison with the eligibility of parole in seven years. He was sent to Soledad. With a life sentence; his child was dead, and the rest of his family was hurt. He was made to



Courtesy of Hamilton family

Lester Hamilton as young man

look like a vicious animal. He was thinking about suicide, and a few brothers knew it. Some of the brothers were old Black Panthers and B.G.F. (Black Guerrilla Family). They had heard about his case and were very angry about the way the state had handled it.

In July 1977, a new law came into effect. The Indeterminate Sentencing Law (ISL) was changed to the Determinate Sentencing Law (DSL). The law allowed for higher prison sentences. All the lifers who had dates (release dates) or had their eligibility (7 years) all went home; even lifers who were on death row got dates and went home. The Supreme Court told the parole board that all lifers sentenced under the old law were entitled to a hearing under the laws they were sentenced under and not under the new laws which would make them do more time. Mr. Hamilton was sentenced to life, eligible in seven years. Under the new law that exact sentence is twenty-five to life. The eligibility for parole is sixteen years and nine months.

On January 10, 1979, Mr. Hamilton went to the parole hearing and was granted an eleven year date (12-28-89). After receiving that parole date, Mr. Hamilton would go back to the board every year. If he did not get in trouble, he would get four months off per year granted for "good time." That would bring his release date from 12-28-89 to 8-28-86.

Throughout that period Mr. Hamilton avoided serious trouble. He talked his way out of many physical altercations and completed some schooling, vocational trades, and Alcoholics Anonymous.

In September, 1986 an officer came to Mr. Hamilton's cell to conduct a routine cell search, just as Mr.

Continued on page 15

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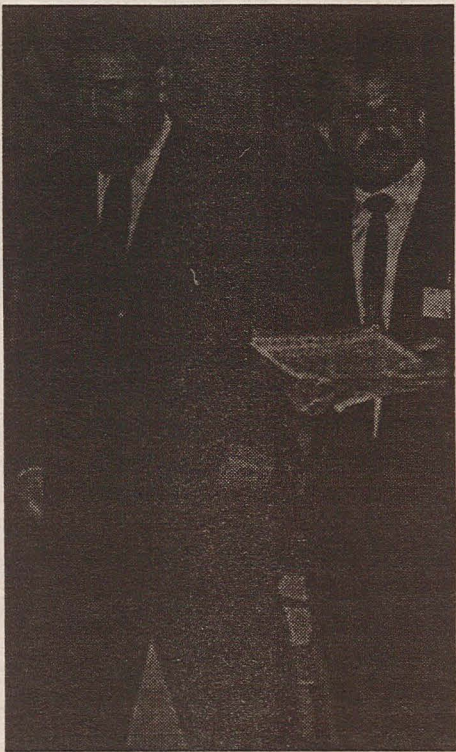
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International Update

Fidel Castro in Copenhagen: "Noble intentions are not enough"



Dr. Fidel Castro Ruz at the Copenhagen summit.

(Editor's note: The following statement was taken from an unofficial translation of Cuban President Fidel Castro Ruz's talk to the World Summit for Social Development in

Copenhagen, Denmark, on March 12.)

Centuries ago, Calderon de la Barca, a famous Spanish playwright, said, "All of life is but a dream and all dreams are nothing but dreams."

The noble intentions of the people gathered here notwithstanding, there cannot be social development in a world where the rich grow richer and the poor grow poorer, and where lower prices are paid to some countries for their raw materials while other countries' finished products are sold at increasingly higher prices.

A world, that is, where the external debt of the least favored by fortune constantly grows and already amounts to the incredible figure of \$1.5 trillion, while interest rates are arbitrarily raised day after day.

Social development is impossible when the population grows unchecked in the poorest areas, when there is an increasing flight of capital from the poor to the rich nations, when brain drain is a pervasive scourge for the neediest, while women, indigenous people, Blacks and other ethnic groups are discrimi-

nated against, and anarchy and chaos prevail under the blind and cruel laws of the market.

There cannot be human rights where there is no compassion, or solidarity where selfishness prevails. The environment cannot be preserved, nor can the natural resources be protected from pollution and depletion and social development be made possible, while consumer societies and wastefulness are portrayed as models for a population that by now exceeds 5.7 billion human beings.

Social development cannot be realized when the arms race and the arms trade persist in spite of the end of the Cold War, and not a penny of what yesterday used to be, and today still is wasted in weapons, is devoted to human progress; when military blocs are being recklessly expanded and sophisticated weapons continue to be produced and improved.

Where hegemonism prevails, neither peace nor social development can exist.

Where hegemonism prevails, with all sorts of interventions carried out under any pretext — albeit in small Third World nations in contempt of every country's sacred right to its full independence and to stand on equal footing in international relations — neither peace nor social development

can exist. That is a lie, a mere deception.

Neoliberalism, a fashionable doctrine imposed on today's world, forces ruthless budget cuts on the underdeveloped nations' programs for health, education, culture, sports and social security, low-cost housing and drinking water as well as other primary needs of the population, thus making social development impossible.

It is indeed shameful that in the industrialized nations there are people living in poverty and that growing unemployment resulting from technological progress cannot be reduced. This is one proof of the irrationality of the prevailing system while the irrepressible increase of drug abuse, xenophobia and violence show its moral decadence.

Though subjected to a criminal blockade only because it does not share the ideas of its powerful neighbor to the north, Cuba — which lost 70 percent of its imports as a result of the demise of the Soviet Union and the socialist camp — has not had one school, one hospital, one elders' home or one day-care center closed.

In spite of its being a poor nation, Cuba, when compared with other countries in the world, is nowadays counted among those with the highest number of teachers, physicians, as well as art and sport instructors per capita. Our infant mortality rate is under 10 per 1,000 live births. We no longer have illiteracy and life expectancy is 75 years.

We have lived through an experience, so we can talk about it. What all of us present in this gathering want is possible, but something more than promises, resolutions and declarations is required. What's required is political will and justice, not only inside every country but also among all countries.

Let the wealth of the world be better distributed among all nations and inside them all. Let real solidarity take root among all peoples.

Only then our dreams of today might become tomorrow's reality.

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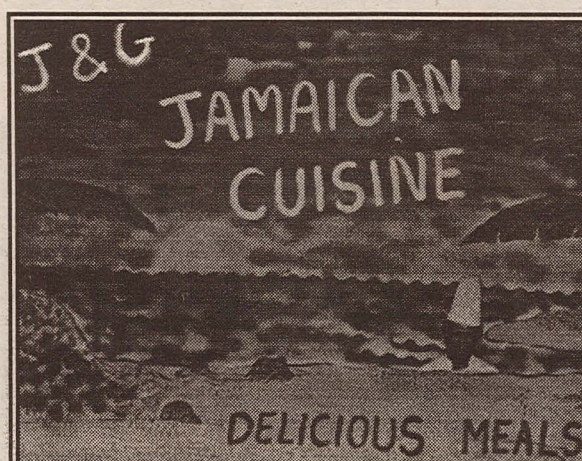
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ARCHIVES

Huey's Corner

Revolutionary Suicide: The Penal Colony

After I had been on lock-up for six months, the guards began to look for cracks, signs of submission; bets were made about when it would happen. I ignored the probing, which puzzled them even more. A guard approached me one day and said, "Most guys go nuts after a few weeks in solitary, and you've already gone six months. What is it? Don't you feel any sort of tension?" Others began to show concern for my mental and physical health. When this started, I knew I had mastered them the way I had mastered the soul breaker [the name that Black prisoners gave to the hole].

To express my contempt for their system I wrote an article called "Prison, Where Is Thy Victory?" smuggled it out with visitors, and had it printed in the Black Panther newspaper. At the time, I still was not permitted writing material — this was before the court order — but I managed to write the essay and see that it reached the Party. In the article I taunted the guards for thinking that because a man's body is in prison they have won a victory over the ideas that inspired his actions. My purpose was to show contempt for my captors and also to encourage the courageous comrades who were continuing the struggle. I was very pleased when the article was published and the guards got the message.

Now, the prison administration changed tactics. Convinced at last that I would not bow down, they began to tell the other prisoners that the only reason for my perseverance was a mistaken belief that my con-

viction would be reversed by a higher court. In other words, they said only hope sustained me, and without this hope to cling to, I would collapse. But I had no more faith in the higher courts than I had in the lower courts, and I was prepared to stay in isolation for the entire fifteen years. This was something they consistently failed to understand.

Very few people in America have any deep perception of conditions and treatment in prisons for an obvious reason: the authorities, who have total control of the situation, see to it that the public is not told the truth. Prisoners cannot communicate freely and privately with the outside. Therefore, what most people know about prisons is what the authorities want them to hear. Millions of people were surprised and shocked by the assassination of Comrade George Jackson and the massacre at Attica because they do not understand how oppressive even the best prisons are.

I have often pondered the similarity between prison experience and the slave experience of Black people. Both systems involve exploitation: the slave received no compensation for the wealth he produced, and the prisoner is expected to produce marketable goods for what amounts to no compensation. Slavery and prison life share a complete lack of freedom of movement. The power of those in authority is total, and they expect deference from those under their domination. Just as in the days of slavery, constant surveillance and observation are part of prison experience, and if inmates develop meaningful and revolutionary friendships among themselves, these ties are broken by institutional transfers, just as the slavemaster broke up families. In my own experience, a number of inmates who refused to follow orders and stay away from me during meal-times were transferred for "institutional convenience." It is generally recognized that a system of slavery is degrading for the master and slave alike. This applies to prison, too. The atmosphere of fear has a distorting effect on the lives of everyone there — from commissioners and superintendents to prisoners in solitary confinement. Nowhere is this more evident than among "correctional officers," as the guards are euphemistically called.

Prison guards are pathetic figures. I had very little contact with them because I stayed in my cell so much, but they harassed me every chance they got. When I went out to see visitors, they searched my cell, sometimes senselessly tearing it up, throwing my washcloth on the floor, dumping my toothbrush in the toilet, and creating a general disorder. If they ever found items from the canteen, such as deodorant or hair oil, they would write me up for having "contraband" in my cell, a violation of prison regulations. They took great pleasure in these petty harassments, and after a time I developed a wry attitude, seeing it for what it was — the childish behavior of small men.

Once I got a "beef" and went to the hole. I went without a struggle. Since I was already in isolation, being in the hole meant only that I ate my meals in my cell instead of the prison dining room. It was the easiest solitary confinement I ever pulled because I was allowed to have reading material there. Most of the books were old and juvenile — Rin-Tin-Tin, Hopalong Cassidy, and the like — but I also got hold of the Bible, which I love, and which I read through again, for the third time. Unlike the soul breaker, my cell contained a bunk, toilet, wash-basin, chair, and tin desk.

The guards never gave up their effort to keep me in a constant state of rage, but I recognized their limitations and avoided their assaults, either by refusing to communicate with them or not doing what they wanted.

Obviously the guards are victims, too, but the fact that they have a limited and very crude kind of power tends to corrupt and brutalize them. Some of them perceive dimly how blighted their lives are and try to compensate in pathetic ways. For instance, when the student disturbances broke out at the University of California at Santa Barbara in the spring of 1970, the Penal Colony dispatched members of the "goon squad" to assist in putting down the rebellion. When the guards returned, they were full of tales about how they had jailed professors and smart rich kids. This made them feel important, bigger than real life, and when they were not talking about revolutionaries as if they were dogs, they boasted



BPP photo

Dr. Huey P. Newton

about the fine motels they had stayed in while beating up members of the university community and the opulent meals they had eaten in "Sambo's" restaurant. In lives so empty and bereft of meaning, events like this were highlights.

One of the evils the guards were guilty of was promoting racial animosity in prison, using it to divide us. Many white inmates are not outright racists when they get to prison, but the staff soon turns them in that direction. While the guards do not want racial hostility to erupt into violence between inmates, they do want hostility kept high enough to prevent any unity. This is something like the strategy used by southern politicians to pit poor whites against poor Blacks. Unfortunately, many Black inmates, caught up in this madness for reasons of sheer survival, are goaded by the guards into turning against the white inmates, or the "Nazis," as they call themselves. In this situation the guards are the oppressors, and the "Nazis" are the tools of that oppression. Most degrading, the whites are not only duped and used by the prison staff, but come to love their oppressors. Their dehumanization is so thorough that they admire and identify with those who deprive them of their humanity. This kind of psychological aberration was so frequent in Nazi concentration camps that its rationale has been a major intellectual question for thirty years. One theory is that the prisoners were reduced to such a state of infantile dependence upon their keepers that they were acting out a kind of grotesque child-parent situation with them, believing that identification with their oppressors was their only hope of survival. A prison situation of this sort is both tragic and explosive.

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Artist Corner



Photo by Charles Slay

Poet Lee Williams' "You Remember Shorty?" moved the house.

Through *The Commemorator* newspaper, we have pledged to communicate to our readers the critical issues of the day stories that tell of the lives and the struggle for a better life, of people in our communities and communities like ours around the country and around the world.

We believe by providing our communities with accurate data and an informed analysis, based on that data, about the issues that concern them most, we can provide answers to the questions of what has happened to our communities, what is happening to our communities, what will happen to our communities and most importantly what we can and must do to control and direct the future of our communities and the lives of the people in them. ("Power is not just the ability to define phenomena, but once defined, to make that phe-



Photo by Charles Slay

Fresh, out of Los Angeles "South Central," recites "Yellow Tape."

nomena act in a desired manner," as Dr. Huey P. Newton said.)

Since poetry, music, dance, theatre, art are all forms of communication, just as is journalism, we asked local poets to come and attempt to do for our readers, through poetry, what we have struggled to do through journalism, that is to tell the story of the lives and the struggle for a better life, of the people in our communities and communities like ours around the world. On this page are some of those artists who answered the call. (Though all are not shown who came and spoke, due to space limitations, they are all mentioned, accounted for, and appreciated here.)

Lee Williams moved the house, with his rendition of "You Remember Shorty?" (we all will, if we all didn't before), and "Glass Eyed Man". Fresh surprised us and watched us nodding out our understanding as he unfolded a sad-but-true poem called "Yellow Tape." Tom Sanders, already a regular writer for *The Commemorator*, showed he could make the leap from journalism to poetry as a vehicle of communication with his poem of "The Tomb of the Unknown Black Child."

Photo by Brett Nichols

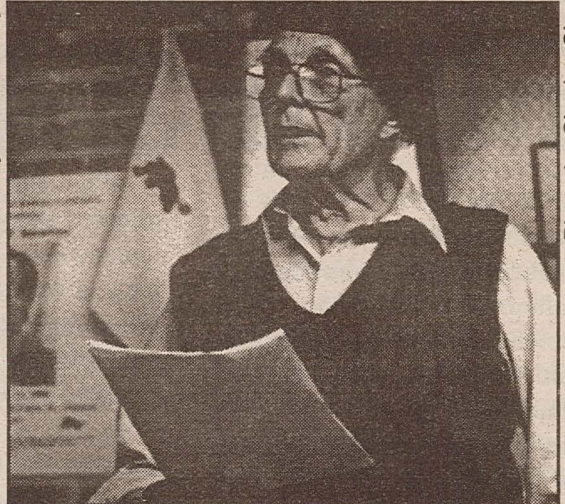


Photo by Charles Slay

Bob Randolph, internationally known poet, captures the audience attention in his role as the in-house poet.

Hal Verb, San Francisco Bay Area radio and TV personality, host of the thought-provoking TV Show "Assassination Update" and impressionist, impressed us with poems that urged the oppressed to keep fighting and to never give up.

Bob Randolph emceed this night of "liberation poetry." He is himself an accomplished poet with an international following.

He reads his poems in 3-languages (English, Spanish and French) fluently, and this evening he read in Spanish a Cuban poem of a people living under foreign oppression.

Paul Taliaferro, read poems that included a bit of theatrics, that told us about the hell the oppressed struggle with.

Pierre Labossiere, native of Haiti and active in the struggle to liberate his homeland, read for us a poem written by Langston Hughes, but translated into Haitian by a Haitian friend of Hughes.

Many of these poets and others will be at our next reading, August 29, at the Black Repertory Theatre;
3201 Adeline Street
Oakland, California.

The work of these poets and others will appear regularly in *The Commemorator* "Artist On Display" page, with a biography of the poet him/herself.

Organizers redouble

Continued from page 1

they went, so long as the city of New York does not have to support them.

This scenario is playing itself out in cities across the nation, where concentrations of low-income and minorities are paying the price for the enrichment of the fabulously wealthy at the expense of the rest of the population; where the government is claiming a loss of tax revenue and consequent budget crisis, as well as programmatic failure as the reason to restrict spending on programs to aid the poor, leaving larger and larger groupings on their own, often resourceless and homeless, according to Dr. Levine.

"This is what keeps people truly terrified. It would be one thing if the government restriction of aid was coupled with the availability of good paying jobs in sufficient number to bring recovery to our community, but our people just keep getting poorer and poorer. We can't go on like this," said Melvin Dickson, Editor of the *Commemorator*, at a community

meeting held April 25 in San Francisco.

"More and more money going into law enforcement and prisons is offering nothing," says Dickson, "and its antagonism to the interests of the low-income community is clear. The number of our people in prison has more than doubled in a decade. Especially, with the 30-year commemoration of the formation of the Black Panther Party coming up, it is most appropriate for us to recommit ourselves to the 10-point program of the Party. Since we have no confidence in government programs or the assistance of monopoly interests who profit from our toil, as well as our unemployment and imprisonment, we understand the need to build these systems of community participation ourselves, through all-volunteer, non-government community activities.

We must organize our own solutions, our own support systems within the community, our own user-friendly organizations, if we are going to survive, much less advance. It is our only hope. That's what Huey Newton taught and it's time for us to do it now."

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What Constitution?

©1995 by Mumia Abu-Jamal

I am not surprised by reports that politicians and police are trying to, once again, silence me, this time by banning books.

What does surprise me, however, is the silence of those who profess to be adherents of the First Amendment, journalists, commentators, and the like. Does the First Amendment play favorites?

What does the First Amendment actually say?

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

United States Constitution, Amendment I [1791]

Nowhere does it say, that I can see, "except for 'Pennsylvania legislators' or 'Pennsylvania prisoncrats'" (who can apparently, make any laws they wish).

What part of the First Amendment allowed the lock-up of MOVE members and Rastafarians because their "hair" constituted a "threat to institutional security"?

What part of the First Amendment allowed the state prosecutor in my case to introduce, as, in essence, an

additional aggravating circumstance, my past membership in the Black Panther Party, even if such news was over a decade old?

What part of the First Amendment allowed the government (through its henchmen — police) to force NPR to back down from its announced intention to broadcast, once a month, commentaries by the writer on "All (?) Things Considered"?

Is this a country that allows the government to decide what people can and cannot hear?

Is this a country that allows the government to decide what people can and cannot read?

Is this a country that allows the government to decide what some people can or cannot say?

It certainly is — and if the truth be told, it always has been.

Several years ago, I read an excellent book entitled *Black Monday*, which dealt, almost exclusively, with cases decided by the United States Supreme Court on freedom of speech, or religion, or association. For over 75 years, almost a century such rights were shredded, because those who held those views were unpopular.

Does the First Amendment play favorites?

Always has.

Ain't it about time for a change?

Read Live from Death Row.

Appeal by Mumia's Sister Lydia Wallace



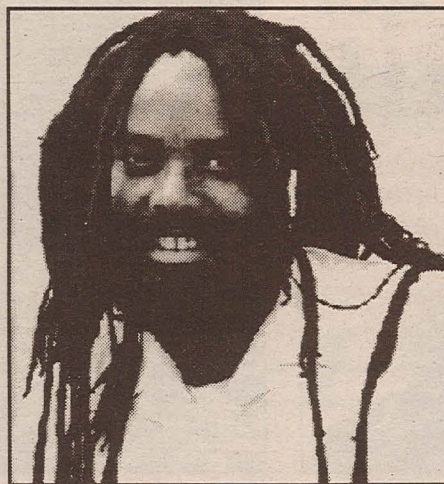
(Editorial note: Saturday evening February 25 1995, at Oakland's Longshoreman Hall, Lydia Wallace spoke to the plight of her brother, Mumia Abu-Jamal who is currently on death row in Waynesburg, Pennsylvania. Republican Tom Ridge won the state house in Pennsylvania, on a pro-death penalty platform and pledged to sign death warrants as soon as he took

office as governor. Lydia Wallace's moving words about her brother were the highlight of the event. The following speech on her family, and their personal relationship to Mumia as a caring human being was given by her before a crowd of over 200 activists and onlookers.)

I want to tell you from my family that we're just angry, we're just tired,

Continued on page 17

Eyewitness Blues



**Mumia Abu-Jamal
(political prisoner)**

©1995 by Mumia Abu-Jamal

The incident that gives rise to this column happens at such a frequency as to be deemed common.

One person shoots another.

Common sense tells us that, in such an instance, the shot will have little difficulty in identifying the shooter.

Along comes the case of young Sheppard Staples, whose life took a serious turn on the night of May 19th, 1994.

A young cop, Tyrone Wiggins, was shot in the leg by a teenager. The next day, while reviewing mug shots, one strikes his attention. "That's him," he proclaims, and on May 20th, 1994, 16 year-old Sheppard becomes Suspect Staples, and subject to the cold certainties of a system that sees number, but not humanity.

Young Staples' grandmother, with whom he was staying, and assorted family members swore it wasn't he — in fact, they named another youth from the area as the culprit. Their protestations were ignored, and Sheppard sat, in the Youth Study Center, while the system began to determine his future, for at least, a generation.

On June 9th, 1994, a preliminary hearing was held before the

Honorable Judge Frank Reynolds of the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas, and the state prosecutor motioned that the teenager be certified and tried as an adult. The motion was granted.

If convicted of the shooting of Officer Wiggins, Staples would face 10 to 20 years in prison, for aggravated assault!

At least four witnesses to Staples' whereabouts existed, but their reports were discounted, and the trial date approached.

It was only when a neighborhood man was arrested and taken in for a parole violation that things began to swing in the youth's favor.

The man told police that he knew that youth who shot Wiggins, and named him. It was his son, he reported, and he even ID'd the gun used.

His son a local drug boy, was then located, in jail, held in an outlying county.

Without hesitation, he told two detectives, at his first interview, that he knew who shot Wiggins — "I did."

The statement of the father, incriminating his son was 'lost', according to the prosecutor. The cops, meanwhile, say they turned it over within a week of its recording.

Whatever the discrepancy, Sheppard Staples sat in YSC juvenile holding facility (i.e., jail) for seven months, while wheels began to turn that would've eaten up 20 years, had not the suspect's pop come forward.

The only reason he wasn't beginning a hellish existence in an adult prison is because he refused the 'deal' offered, six to 12 years if he pled guilty.

Wiggins no doubt, was absolutely certain that he knew who capped him, and his partner, may've also been as certain.

But both were wrong, and Staples might've paid for it with his life.

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Native Americans Fighting Corruption in North Carolina



Courtesy of Thelma Clark

Eddie Hatcher

Robeson County, N.C. — Native American activist Eddie Hatcher, who worked continuously for the rights of minorities and poor whites in Robeson County, North Carolina, and exposed government involvement in a major drug-smuggling operation, has been confined in North Carolina prisons for over five years on state kidnapping charges, brought to court only after a federal jury found him not guilty on all counts of the first federal indictment ever

brought under the 1984 Anti-Terrorist Act. Hatcher occupied the offices of the *Robesonian* newspaper on February 1, 1988, holding the building and 14 employees for ten and a half hours to focus international attention on his evidence that thirty-four major business people and law enforcement officers were behind the major cocaine trafficking in the county.

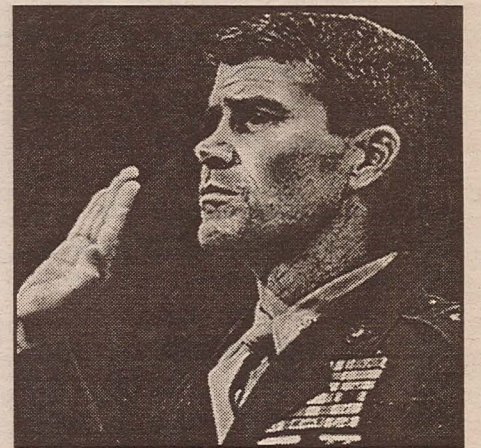
"One of the main allegations I leveled against officials," said Hatcher, "was and is, that large amounts of cocaine, in its almost purest form, which was dumped into rural Robeson County, beginning predominantly around 1986, was part of the many shipments of cocaine being moved and guided by Col. Oliver North, via the ranch of John Hull in Costa Rica with the funds raised from the cocaine used to finance the Contras. Hull, whose ranch in Costa Rica was used by North's pilots to fly the cocaine to Homestead Air Force Base, was in fact indicted by the Costa Rican government on major drug trafficking charges among other things.

"Hull, a CIA operative from Indiana, remains free in the U.S. A letter was endorsed by 22 U.S. congressmen to Rafael Calderon, President of Costa Rica, wherein the congressmen attempted to disengage the extradition warrant on John Hull, stating that Hull was a respected U.S. citizen. President Calderon, in return, replied to those congressmen that Costa Rica would not be intimidated by the U.S. when they (Costa Rica) were truly attempting to stop the trafficking of cocaine and it was obvious that the U.S. was only purporting to be concerned with cocaine trafficking."

President Ronald Reagan and Vice President George Bush wanted to use U.S. tax money to fund counter-revolutionary right-wing guerrilla groups to overthrow the popular Nicaraguan government of Daniel Ortega. The American people refused, forcing the U.S. congress to deny funding and the Reagan administration began looking for other ways to raise funds for their right-wing Contra guerrillas. We know they illegally sold U.S. weapons. But it was highly suspected that they also transported cocaine for money from South American shores to U.S. shores.

When Hatcher attempted to alert regional and federal agents about the corruption of local officials, his

charges were not only dismissed as fictional, but he became the subject of increasing harassment and intimidation. It was then that he realized that his discovery went beyond Sheriff Stone, to involve Governor Jim Martin and Secretary of Crime and Public Safety Joe Dean. Hatcher had discovered a component of the



Oliver North, pointman for the Reagan and Bush administration testifying at the Congressional Iran-contra hearing

U.S. "Iran-Contra" cocaine operation, which had, under the supervision of Lt. Colonel Oliver North and the legal and judicial protection of Attorney General Edwin Meese, allowed Robeson County to become

Continued on page 19

Panther: Movie Review

by Shannon Rucker

Simply put, *Panther*, is an enjoyable movie which attempts to tell the story of the Black Panther Party. It is at times adrenalin'-pumping, with its police confrontations and displays of arms, one of the most dramatic examples of which comes early on, when two white police officers are in a dark alley brutally expressing to a Black man their belief that such things as justice and respect aren't his to have. Huey P. Newton, Bobby Seale, "Little Bobby" Hutton and two other Panthers arrive armed with shotguns, which were lawful to carry, and Huey's knowledge of the law and the peoples' rights within it and they confront the police. It is inspiring to see these Black men ready to protect themselves and their communities with guns in one hand and the police's own law firing from their mouths. And when the police back down, yielding to a group of people they believe to be less than themselves, the theater crowd applauded and cheered, proud of the stance, proud of the victory. There were other victories throughout the movie much like this one as well as continuous cameo appearances which amused the audience and left them asking "Isn't that...?" and saying "Look, that's...."

Police confrontation, humor, star power (not to mention the Panther Pack give-a-ways before the movie began), all combined to make *Panther* good entertainment. And that's where the conflict arises.

Sometimes things aren't meant to be put so simply. It struck me as odd that despite the BPP's historical significance, was marketed as if it was *Terminator 2*. Yet the story of the Panther's is every bit as compelling and historically relevant as the story of the holocaust portrayed in *Schindler's List*.

For the most part, the movie also more closely follows the style of *Terminator 2*. It lacks the ability to establish the depth of it's characters and never truly explored Panther ideology, save the Panthers' declaration to end "police brutality and murder of Black people". This declaration is but one point among ten and yet the movie focuses almost solely on it, choosing to give it more weight and substance than any other, trivializing the foundation and accomplishments of the BPP in the bargain. Not only were the Panthers about carrying guns to stave off the constant wave of police brutality, they offered solutions and brought about action, implementing survival programs in the Black community which addressed such issues as health, education, youth and senior services, etc. They owned a theory based on an understanding that poverty is the problem and succinct, lasting systemic change is needed to eradicate it, and that a particular kind of political party is needed to lead that struggle.

The movie never quite relays how amazing it is that one organization could effectively orchestrate

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Students at New Jersey College Fight Racism and Classism

by Susan Findlay

Amiri Baraka, literary figure and America's biting social critic reveals below what was really behind recent remarks by Rutgers University's president Lawrence, when he claimed that blacks lacked the genetic makeup to compete successfully with whites on standardized tests.

While President Lawrence excused his remarks as a mere slip of the tongue, Baraka reveals that this "slip" simply gives us our most recent peep into the inner workings of a racist institution currently carrying out its latest betrayal of democracy, public education, and equal opportunity in America.

In this latest betrayal of public trust and government mandate, equal opportunity is once again the victim in an alleged budget crunch, which really is a cover for the reorganization of resources away from the public sector and from spending that would foster equal access to the poor and people of color. The public has been turned over to the private sector, and for Rutgers students and students elsewhere, this has meant exploitation as cheap sources of replacement labor through work-study programs and community service requirements, job placement tracks leading to careers in low-paid service work, student loan programs and rising tuition fees.

According to Baraka, racial segregation is alive and well at Rutgers, where systematic plans of action have long been in place to separate students by race, class and consciousness, and to restrict opportunity, academic and otherwise, by insuring the inferior status of resources made available to the low-income, particularly minority population. This has been the historical norm at Rutgers and other college campuses.

The creation of Rutgers' Livingston College, long touted as a concession to minorities, actually followed a systematic plan used on other campuses — move in a special school of sociology or social welfare, hire two or three faculty members of

radical reputation, and have all the students of dissident consciousness flock to that school to learn to make lasting social change. The course of study provided no real solution, only a place where potentially viable leadership of low-income and minority communities could be contained, segregated from the rest of the institution and college pool, making it easier to surveil political activity, destroying any real potential for students to pursue meaningful societal change.

Eventually, the school becomes ineffectual, radical faculty are fired or leave in frustration, and students are put on separate and unequal tracks which limit career and graduate school opportunities. Baraka parallels this situation to one that took place during America's Reconstruction Era following the end of the Civil War and slavery.

The Paul Robeson Student Center, the establishment of which President Lawrence took credit in his defense

of his record, was originally housed on the Livingston College campus, but was recently relocated across town, making it less accessible to the very students most likely to use its services or to emulate its namesake.

Following the president's comments, outraged students, faculty and members of the general public demanded his resignation.

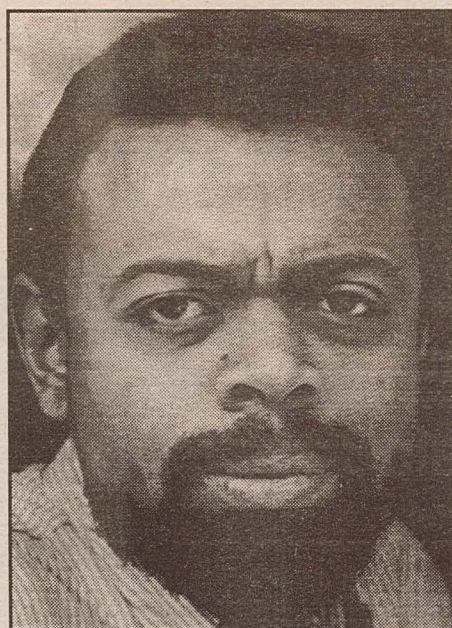
A look at the internal workings of the New Jersey state university system headed by Lawrence reveals that students at Rutgers need more than just his resignation, which in fact never materialized.

Rutgers University students' struggle to overcome conditions in which they are being exploited as cheap, replacement labor through work-study programs and community service requirements, student loan programs and job placement tracks leading to careers in low-paid service work, coupled with rising tuitions which are increasing the pressure toward low-pay jobs for students,

which many feel interfere with their educations, after which most students find there are no jobs available in their chosen field of study, in fact, had been building for some time, raising the possibility the Lawrence "slip" was really a trick, aimed at diverting an economic struggle for funding for low-income advancement into a solely racial conflict, with all the attendant and misplaced emotion attached. By exam time, protests and publicity over his comments had petered out, tuition hikes had been accepted, and the larger economic issues had been obscured.

Lawrence's comments reveal his underlying belief in the inferiority of blacks to compete with the rest of society, and provide a justification for restrictions on opportunities for low-income minorities. In the article that follows, Professor Baraka attempts to extract the positive points contained within the student effort while explaining its history.

A Slip of the Lip?



Courtesy of Negro Almanac

by Amiri Baraka

The Student Coalition of Rutgers is to be broadly supported and celebrated! It has moved against the most recent "racial" fascist attack on the Afro-American people.

Lawrence's "slip" is actually a window into the racist world of Rutgers University, where, during the height of the so-called "cold war," ex-Nazis were routinely given bogus biographies to clean them up for "anti-communist" work, where an English professor like Richard Poirier was busted several times for working for the CIA and has organized through the years to keep "radical" professors out. (Poirier was successfully sued by at least two Rutgers faculty for CIA-sponsored, anti-Semitic, and anti-women opinions.) Rutgers, where the Livingston College experimental program for minorities was trashed; where Afro-American Studies, the new Robeson Center, ostensibly on the New Brunswick campus, and most black students, are placed across the river, separated from the main campus, like South African townships.

This is part of an overall national pattern, as the gains of the civil rights movement are destroyed, made null and void by the betrayal of actual equality for the Afro-American people. All resources are being removed from the inner cities as part of the elimination of the public sector, the supposed guarantor of U.S. democracy. The entire American people are being placed directly under "the private sector," which is the rising norm of U.S. fascism. Destroy and loot the public sector, super-exploit the people, destabilize and lower the quality of life for most Americans, under the mysterious robber-babble of "budget cuts." Like the intensifying U.S. "economic disease" of factory closings, massive layoffs, outright

assaults on the wages, organization and democratic rights of U.S. workers.

The various reactionary and racist theories of black inferiority are mere ammunitions for this new betrayal of black democracy. Lawrence's "Freudian slip" is more than a slip. It is a racist tip of the iceberg. Below Lawrence's self-incriminating tongue lies the entire history and present day abysmally racist condition of Rutgers University. Rutgers, which just last month, finally restored its greatest alumnus, Paul Robeson, to official acknowledgment after years of non-existence and invisibility. Even though fifteen years ago progressive forces including the Revolutionary Communist League (MLM), of which I was chairman, had pushed then President Blaustein into naming the Newark Student Center after Robeson and giving him an honorary Ph.D.

(Albeit, the latter was done at a late-night cocktail party at Blaustein's backwoods digs, with ex-New Jersey Governor Meyner drunk and bubbling, spread out across the floor, with his congressperson wife, Ann, ministering to him. Dizzy Gillespie and Lillian Hellman were there, among others.)

Tragically, Paul Robeson, Jr.'s recent performance as mouthpiece for the Rutgers' Brown Shirts to defend their historically documented racist policies, even against his own father, is similar to the blatant opportunism of revisionism. This same kind of dead-in-the-water collabora-

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In Commemoration of the students killed at Jackson State and Kent State



Courtesy of Collier's Yearbook

When the federal government used a "Bring the Boys Home" president, to expand the Vietnam War secretly into neighboring Cambodia, students protested on campuses across the country.

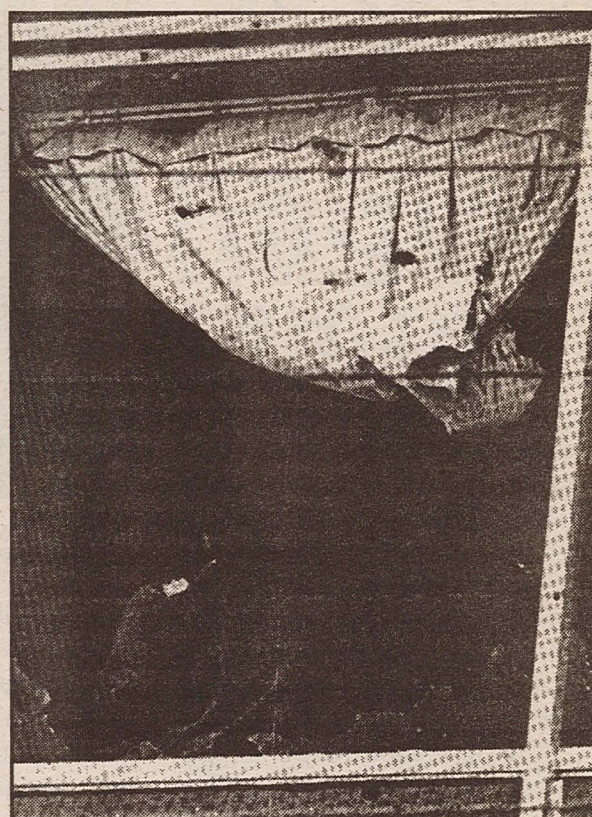
On one such campus, Kent State in Ohio, four unarmed students protesters were shot and killed by the National Guard.

Miles away to the South another student protest broke out. The school was Mississippi's Jackson State College and 10-days after the national guard gunned down four white students in Ohio, Mississippi highway patrolmen sprayed a women's dormitory at Jackson State College killing two black, unarmed, student protesters.

Each May, across the country, we learn of the deaths at Kent State University, but seldom is there a mention in the popular press about the murder of two-black students at Jackson State.

There is no excuse for the killings at either university, except to say they were casualties of war, one declared by the U.S. government against its own citizens. These victims of government oppression should be remembered, along side Malcolm X, Fred Hampton and Mark Clark, Dr. Huey P. Newton and more.

So, let all of us resolve to never speak of Kent State massacre without also mentioning those who fell at Jackson State.



Courtesy of Collier's Yearbook

A Slip of the Lip?

Continued from page 12

tion with imperialism made the Communist Party of the USA a bourgeois tool and brought the Soviet Union, upheld by Paul Robeson, Sr. when it was a revolutionary country, to its present disgusting status, run by imperialist compradors with a traitorous alcoholic as president.

The current attack on the democratic rights and robbery of resources of black people, working people and oppressed nationalities as well as the peoples of the world, is an exact replay of the reactionary slavery-maintaining forces that destroyed nineteenth-century black reconstruction, equality, and self-determination. This is a betrayal from which we still suffer, returning for the same causes.

"Lawrence's 'inadvertent' allusion to the racist claptrap of the 'genetic inferiority of black people,' is a replay of the nineteenth century. Books like 'Cannibals All,' or 'White Supremacy, Negro Inferiority' became popular *after* the civil war to reassert slavery, along with the introduction of racist stereotypes, to assert that black equality in the U.S. could not exist because blacks were inferior per se. The same stereotypes are today reintroduced, as the Afro-American people are attacked and vilified in the same way. 'Living Color,' Spike Lee, 'House

Party' Snipes, and the rest of the neo-Step-and-Fetchits direct from Hollywood serve the same purpose: to impeach our claim to U.S. citizenship by 'demonstrating,' through these antic stage jigaboos, our amusing and contemptible 'inferiority.'

Imperialism, Then And Now

In the 1890's any black equality was destroyed. America has never been a democracy, to paraphrase Du Bois, nor have the Afro-American people ever been citizens. By 1896, 'separate but evil' was the law of the land, and black people could not vote anywhere in the south. It was the reappearance of slavery, though destroyed, as 'American apartheid.'

What Malcolm and King, the Panthers, and the black liberation movement of the 1950s to the 1970s supposedly obtained for the Afro-American people were the same things that the slave revolts and escapes, the abolitionists, the civil war, emancipation, the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments, forty acres and a mule were supposed to have gained for black people after the Civil War. The repeat of the nineteenth century betrayal of the Afro-American nation, and its dispersed nationals mainly in U.S. cities, is going on right now.

In order for the new imperialists of the 1890s to get in on the most attractive of the international booty, they had to loot the treasury —

'they' being the banks, the railroads, Rockefeller, Morgan, Carnegie, Wall Street, etc. The Spanish-American War and World War I announced U.S. imperialism's rising power. Slavery was made international and called colonialism. But black democracy cannot exist without the resources and reorganized social relations necessary for the Afro-American people actually to be American citizens, not recycled chattel. Today this is partially disguised by the post civil rights movement rise of a thoroughly 'integrated' sector of the American Negro petit bourgeoisie, the most empty-headed group of imperialist connected and minded anti-black and anti-working class house servants yet to appear.

Since the fall of the revisionist social-imperialist Soviet Union, wars of national oppression, and a new rise of Nazi fascism have become ubiquitous, as a 'New World Order,' meaning imperialism, redivides the world again, as in 1913, 1929, 1950, etc. The U.S. corporate rulers must brazenly loot the U.S. treasury in order to compete for the new East European and Third World markets, 'freed' from their old ties with the Soviet bloc. It is so direct and painful because the U.S. is in a weakened economic position, due to superpower contention and because the corporate rulers 'export' so much of our money (capital) worldwide. Thus U.S. society became less productive, depleted of the necessary resources. It is like a wild animal devouring

itself with its insatiable greed. The historic parallel is stunningly obvious, as confirmation of the continuing and periodic crises of imperialism, which is capitalism in its monopoly and dying stage.

The same sell-out opportunism that toppled the fake communists in Moscow now clearly threatens post-Mao China. This opportunism was the fundamental cause of the contemporary 'world wide triumph' of western imperialism and the ending of the revolutionary period 1947-1975, overthrowing the progressive movement of 'countries want independence, nations want liberation, the people want revolution.'

The fake socialists were bribed, bought, overthrown with 'sugar coated' missiles. So too were many of the national liberation organizations and would-be communist and socialist and workers' parties worldwide, likewise destroyed or co-opted, made into a neo-colonial house negro loyal 'opposition,' employed to pretend imperialism is democracy and self-determination.

We also witness the Democratic Party's betrayal of American workers, running to the far right in a race with the Republicans to declare U.S. fascism (slavery redux) first. There is also the double cross of the union bureaucrats, who are really agents of big business, hired by the corporations and the rightist state apparatus to destroy the unions and put labor back in the jungle. That is, maximum

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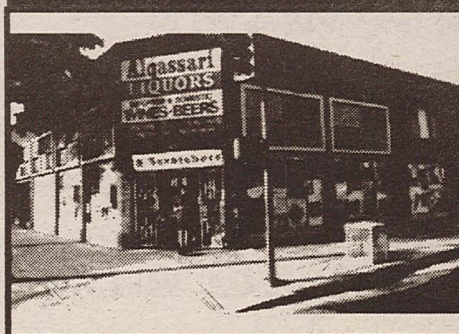
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Who's Next?

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Despite the federal injunction ruled by Judge Pfaiezer, cutting short the legal enforcement of Proposition 187, Latinos and other groups of color have felt the stain marked by its supporters. Without the injunction, Proposition 187 would deny undocumented immigrants healthcare (unless emergency), any kind of public assistance, and their children would be unable to attend school (whether born or not born in the U.S.). However, "the measure has succeeded in achieving its objective, despite its acknowledged unconstitutionality," says Renee Saucedo, a member of the board of directors of CIRRS (Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and Services; Winter, 1994-95). "The media and politicians, such as governor Wilson, have made it acceptable for uninformed citizens to scapegoat minorities in general, documented or undocumented."

Scapegoating: as old as class society

Scapegoating, what does it mean and who does it serve? Scapegoating



With the passage of Prop. 187 in California an atmosphere of open game has been declared on the hispanic population.

Machiavelli who believed and recommended that political leaders govern by deceit, division and control.

We hear plenty from the corporate sponsored media, "illegal immigrants take our jobs, too many blacks commit too many crimes, foreigners are taking over our communities and small businesses, single mothers are undermining our "family values," welfare recipients and seniors on fixed income are draining our budgets and finally our youth are a bunch of guntoting, over indulgent drug users!" All these groupings have one thing in common — they are all low-

income aimed at poor, low-income working people, not everyone equally, and therefore discriminatory in its enforcement.

In Los Angeles a black single mother was quoted as saying, "hell yeah, I was for 187!" she went on to reason "a bunch of Mexicans moved into the building, crowding into these small apartments, playing their music all loud. Now, look at it, trash all around, dirty."

Scapegoating is an ally to those who benefit and actively support and perpetuate the way in which most of us are forced to live, such as career politicians like Governor Wilson, who has no viable solutions to the economic crisis that plagues California. His attempt at the presidency creates some frightening realizations."

Scapegoating is a very simple tactic to employ. Why? Because it takes a larger issue like unemployment and finds somebody to take responsibility for it, rather than those responsible for the employment and disemployment of individuals in a system. Strategically, scapegoating takes a small, voiceless group of people and creates of them, an "enemy within" through contrived stereotypes and threatening manipulated "statistics." Once they separate "them" from "us," our motivation to work together is undermined. It is the same old Machiavellian divide and conquer philosophy that maintained the status quo of the state. This is the nature of the 187 anti-immigration campaign.

Proposition 187 is only one example of scapegoating; its passage opens the door to a plethora of other anti-poor and working people laws in

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Three strikes

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the attack and those who are not must act as one to win.

It is the constitutional right of every person charged with a crime to have their "day in court," to be tried by a jury of their peers, to receive humane treatment at the hands of the government, to have assistance with their defense. These rights are not, in this day of crisis, where government programs are attacking our communities and our workers, self-effectuating. Many are routinely denied, such as the right to be faced by one's accuser where that accuser is an informant. Pressure is being put on prisoners to react, furnishing excuses for further oppression, through the use of special housing units, isolation, removing access to prison facilities like yards and law libraries, instituting hard labor, banning cigarettes, controlling reading matter, placing in special housing units or special prison facilities, and so forth.

It may be that when the government puts us at the plate, we're in the game for life after three strikes; but we're not looking for another swing, we want a whole new ball game. Together with those of us who are employed in the prison and court systems because no other jobs exist for us, we don't want to swing in reaction. To stand up and not swing in reaction, but to demand our due, to struggle to help each other through, to build the tie that binds in our communities, is our only choice.



U.S. Border Patrol, like city police, resort to fear and intimidation as their last tool in attempting to enforce unenforceable laws.

can be defined as casting blame away from oneself onto a person or group who is clearly innocent. Scapegoating is most effective when used as a smokescreen or diversion to distract the observer, while something more corrupt is going on behind the observers back.

Scapegoating has been around as long as there has been "haves" and the "have-nots." It even pre-dates the classical cynicism of Niccolo

income unorganized and without political clout.

This points to the question of economics — no wealthy Germans, Japanese, Arabs, Mexicans or Africans will have a problem getting health care in the U.S., getting education in the U.S., or anything else this country has to offer to those with money.

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A Slip of the Lip?

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control by the "private sector," the international corporate giants who prefer fascism, if necessary, to control and abuse and exploit the world's people, not only to control all the world's resources but to be absolutely in control of all aspects of society.

Here in New Jersey, the threatened smashing of Newark citizens' voting rights with the unconstitutional and racist states' rights disenfranchisement that the so-called "state takeover" really is, in turn with the other far right and racist outrages going on across the nation (e.g., the "Bell Curve" brings to mind the racist pseudo-science of the slave nineteenth century, or Clinton scamming the people talking about health care out of one side of his mouth, but bringing in the crime bill, the 1990s Black Codes, on the real side.

Revolutionary Tasks Today

The Lizard Cult's "Contract with America" is really *deja vu* "separate but evil." It sets the stage for further outrage of Rutgers' President Lawrence's so-called "slip." The U.S. attack on the democratic rights of the Afro-American people, a replay of post civil war reconstruction betrayal, is more than just an attack on black people, it is an attack on U.S. democracy itself, attempting to destroy any semblance of public governance of the country. Driven by the inherent contradictions of U.S. imperialism itself to the "open terrorist dictatorship" of the corporate state. A U.S. ruled openly by an international corporate military-industrial complex.

This is not some quickly reversible "quirk" in U.S. democracy, it is the clear collapse of capitalism already monopolistic and dying, transformed through its demise into open fascism. The American people, from all the countries in the western hemisphere, must heed Mao's timely dictum, "cast aside illusion, prepare

to struggle." In the United States our hand to hand struggles with rising fascism are central not only to the survival of U.S. democracy but of civilization itself. It will be either socialism or fascism. ...

We want to know, for instance, just who are the people on the board of trustees. Really! Remember that white supremacist Johnson and Johnson, which has an inordinate amount of control over this state institution, *never did divest from apartheid South Africa*, and was openly defiant about it, one board member stating on television that he thought South Africa was correct to withhold the vote from black people since "They didn't know what to do with it!" The continued domination of J&J over Rutgers is one key factor in the continuing anti-black climate at Rutgers.

We must also find out what is the relationship of "tax use" to democracy of public representation. That is, what do black New Jersey and federal tax dollars given to Rutgers get in return? Certainly any scrutiny over the years of the pattern of bringing blacks with names to the school, but quickly getting rid of them (Nikki Giovanni, Sonia Sanchez, Jayne Cortez, Amiri Baraka, among others) will lead to still more thoroughly funky revelations.

Yes, Lawrence must go, but that is only the beginning. The entire university must be turned inside out, looked at carefully, and cleaned up. Rutgers' racism has been an open secret for many years. Time and again state and federal agencies have slapped them mildly on the wrist, even while admitting their unrepentant racist patterns of student admissions, faculty and staff hiring, etc.

It's time this anti-black "tradition" was smashed. Lawrence's inadvertent open mouth must be treated as if it were the door to the vampire's castle. You know the procedure, a stake through the vampire's heart is mandatory, but the whole joint must be thoroughly cleaned and fumigated and turned into...I know...a university! A state university run by the people of New Jersey. How about that, for a change?

Family's Experience

Continued from page 6

Hamilton's cellmate was in the process of taking a metal plate off of the wall. They went right to the hole in the wall and found hypodermic syringes hidden there. Mr. Hamilton reports that he had no knowledge of them being in the cell, and his cellmate confirmed that fact.

Well, Mr. Hamilton went to the board in April 1987, and he was informed that the board didn't want to see him. They were putting him up for a recision hearing, and on June 5, 1987, they took his release date away. Mr. Hamilton has done another life sentence for an infraction that should

have been punishable by revoking 30 days of good time at most, which is what happened to Mr. Hamilton's cellmate, who was not a lifer. He lost 120 days and good time credits. He stayed clean for six months, got all his good time back, and went home on his original release date. He has had that same problem in two other institutions.

Mr. Hamilton went to the board every year since they took his date, and every year they continue to deny parole. They continue to hear the matter under the old laws.

The Mr. Hamilton's need legal assistance and they need help from concerned citizens who can help ensure the laws are followed. With your help, Mr. Mr. Hamilton can be free. Without your help, this family may never be together again.

Privatization

Continued from page 2

resources is an unstable, insecure public, not able to plan, not willing to save, destabilized in position and condition, in both body and mind. Yes, instability in foundation and position leads to unstable people with vague mental disorders, like schizophrenia, phobias, depression and manias, or both.

Not only are state and local governments privatizing everything from public health to police services, but our tax dollars are being spent to impose privatization on poor and minority nations all over the world.

These changes of world *privatization* have occurred so rapidly in the country that most citizens are confused, "what in the hell is going on with the economy?" Very few of us look to what is happening politically and economically on the international scene, why the American tax dollars going to United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to specifically pay for the relocation of American corporations in poor countries, to exploit cheap labor to maximize profits for the wealthy elite *who are already wealthy*. Most of us are either too busy trying to make ends meet, or we are trying to find a way to forget the hard times.

U.S. Agency for International Development has been proudly

announcing its assistance in turning the Bangladesh fertilizer industry over to private owners. It is no coincidence that this has resulted in an increase in fertilizer imports from the United States. In India AID is designing "safety net" programs for people who used to have jobs but, as a result of privatization, are being laid off with "severance pay." Meantime AID boasts that in Nepal it has helped privatize eight firms and "each has increased employment."

This, of course, fits in perfectly with the global *privatization* strategy. They do not want us to figure out their game plan. They do not want us to understand such policies as Structure Adjustment Programs (SAPs) encouraged by the International Monetary Funds (IMF) towards poor nations, and how all of that ties in to keep working people everywhere poor, such as South Africa, Mexico, Haiti, Somalia, Eastern Europe, just to name a few. They do not want us to make the connection as to why the maximization of profits for the wealthy class of the world are murdering people, are producing homelessness, and crime — they do not want us to know these things. Just as they do not want us to know that workfare, prison labor, contract labor, temp work, etc., is slow death for the American people. They do not want us to know that, today, the U.S. government's schemes of *privatization* are the oil that keeps world capitalism afloat — they do not want us to know what time it is.

In Egypt, where economic development was highly praised by Malcolm X after a visit in 1964, "privatization" has meant evicting farmers from land given to them in public trust under Gamel Abdel Nasser, destroying their titles to the land and their homes, and sending them into the slums of Cairo.

Nowhere has privatization, led by AID and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) caused so much misery as in Africa. Individual farmers have been left entirely at the mercy of the international market, stripped of any kind of cooperative protection in either the price of seed and fertilizer or the price available for their prod-

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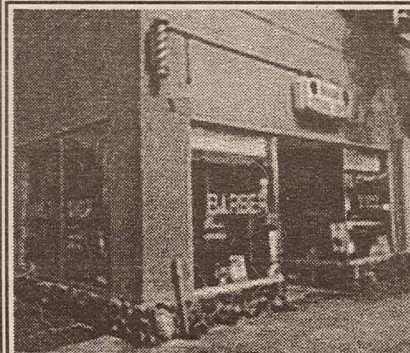
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Who's Next?

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which the only intent is to divide and control.

187 has succeeded in creating animosity, resulting in a struggle between working class people by perpetuating the age old myth that illegal immigrants take all our jobs; when in actuality, government policies favoring the rich, is the main contributor to the increasing level of poverty in our working class communities and other poor communities in other nations.

Government policies like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), enterprise zones, prison labor, workfare, etc, all do more to take the jobs of American workers than any immigrant.

Mexicans could cross the borders unabated on any given day, all day, and they could not take away as many American jobs as the Caribbean Basin Initiative, that encourages U.S. companies to relocate to Haiti, Dominican Republic, The Agency for International Development's (AID) program aimed at luring American companies to El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala; or NAFTA aimed at making it easy for American corporations to close down in the U.S. and move to Canada or Mexico, or Enterprise Zones that lure companies from one part of the country to another with incentives and promises of cheap labor and resources, and the list goes on.

"Undocumented immigrants do not take our jobs, said Marcus Morse, Volunteer Coordinator for the Commemoration Committee, "someone gave them their jobs. Someone who is willing to subject other human beings to severe working and living conditions, sometimes lethal, supplying very little pay. Ultimately both workers and their families are cheated. One is out of a job while the other jeopardizes his or her health for peanuts. The only winner is the company whose overhead goes down and

through using one worker against another, is rewarded with cheaper wages and higher profits."

As U.S.-based financial blocks attempt to control Mexico's economic policy under NAFTA, many economists believe Mexico's recovery plan will plunge the country into a prolonged recession. The *San Francisco Chronicle* cites a study by UCLA professor Jorge Hinojosa, which estimates that the crisis will propel 100,000 more immigrants into the U.S. than expected this year. If these workers combined with American workers, demanded that employers pay them the same wages and benefits as American workers it would raise the income for both.

Once the light of truth is shed upon the claims that immigrants cost U.S. tax-payers money, this too can easily be disproved. According to *Collective Endeavor* (Jan, 1995), "legal and illegal immigrants generate \$25-\$30 billion in profit yearly in the U.S. and pay \$1.9 billion in state and local taxes on income, sales and property, and \$3.4 billion in federal income taxes." At the same time an INS study reported that only 1% of undocumented workers receive any state-financed sustenance or welfare payments. Furthermore, ex-census Bureau immigration specialist, Jeffrey Passell found that undocumented immigrants actually contribute \$12 billion more than they use in social services. This may be because most undocumented workers do not know that they qualify for public aid in the first place, due to their alienated lifestyle and little or no command of the English language upon arriving in the states. So, far from ripping off America, it is revealed the immigrant is the one being ripped off, as has always been the case.

If we are truly interested in the destination of most of our tax dollars and the reasons for the declining standard of living in this country over the past fifteen years, don't blame some other group of economically



Mucho trabajo, poco dinero (Much work, little money) is a familiar saying and a familiar scene among migrant agricultural workers.

dispossessed workers. There needs to be an examination of how the average American has been dispossessed. Since 1973 a good 4/5 of our population has endured stagnant or falling incomes." says Doug Down, Author of *United States. Capital Development. Since 1776*. He goes on to state, "From 1977 to 1990 the income to the very rich has doubled, while the income of the bottom 50 million fell by 10%."

The Lowest paid worker

The economic stability of our communities have always depended on a foundation of economically stable working families.

At the base of that foundation is the lowest paid working people. As we allow the base of our community's economic structure to be eroded i.e. through lowering the income of the lowest paid worker, the whole community sinks lower in income—the once middle class sinks towards poverty. Just as if we reinforce and raise the living and working conditions of our lowest paid workers, all levels of income in that community rise with them.

This fact indicates a need for all working people to rally to the side of migrant workers, prison laborers, workfare workers, etc. as the first step in raising the living and working standards of us all.

A collective approach in solving the bottom line question of poverty would literally, in the final analysis, transform society and the fundamental way in which we relate to one another.

In the final analysis, we must defeat more than 187 — we must defeat all policies and programs aimed at turning one group of poor and oppressed people against another. If we succeed in abolishing Prop 187, we are still left with the epidemic use of scapegoating or to be more direct, a full scale war on low-income people, in general, that will not stop until we stop it or working people of all cultures and races are chattel, owned and controlled in every way by those who profit from our labor, so that the income of the very wealthy can continue to go up.

We need a broader struggle that is prepared to confront other laws proposing to impose the same "solutions" onto different groups of people. With the recent attacks by the new Republican congress, on school meal programs, AFDC, public housing and other types of government aid, it has become evident that immigrants will not be the only group to bear the brunt of scapegoating.

This struggle can only be built by recognizing our common oppression and oppressors and building on that recognition, solidarity, inside and outside our borders. Poor and working class communities in Mexico and other places ultimately have the same basic needs as we do, earning a living wage.

This means that we must organize to change government policies from the bottom-up—as we pursue an intercommunalist approach (see the *Commemorator* statement of purpose) to our social and economic liberation.

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Mumia's Sister

Continued from page 10

we're just scared to death. We have a new governor and this governor just wants to kill everything on Death Row, like yesterday. We rely on you



Lydia Wallace, sister of Mumia Abu Jamal and tireless fighter for her brother's freedom, with Melvin Dickson, Editor of the Commemorator and Chairman of the Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party.

because it takes a mass of people to do what has to be done, and for sure Mu has tried to be a father from a distance, he really has. Christmas times, birthdays, we get cards. He's always there. I can only tell you that this was our first experience with the system. I can tell you that my mother raised us to respect the system. I can tell you that we knew once we got into this court of law that we would have justice. I can only tell you that we knew that, once the truth was out, Mumia would walk out of here with us. We knew that. We didn't have any problem with that. We just said, let the truth out and he would walk.

So we sat in the court every day. We heard what they had to say. We heard what Mu had to say if he got a chance to say it. Because most of the time they snatched him out of the courtroom. We would go home in the evening at the end of the trial day and

we would see the evening newspaper. And we would look at it and we'd look at each other. They must have been in another courtroom, because they had where we were, but that wasn't what happened where we were. The people stifled the notes.

Mumia told us early when he said, "Don't get your hopes up. Don't be surprised: they're going to sentence

me to death." He told my mother, "Be strong, mom, but they're going to sentence me to death." But we didn't believe that — not our baby. Uh-uh. He's my little brother, my kid brother. This couldn't happen to him. But it feels like it is happening, and I'm scared to death. When they say death: my baby brother? The one who I changed his diapers? I don't believe it!

But it becomes more and more real every day. And without you, it might happen. All I can tell you is, Mumia's just my baby brother. He's the one I changed his diapers for. He's the one that used to make us laugh. He's also the one who taught us to kiss and love each other. We didn't know how to do that. He's the one who told us, "Don't step on those roaches! They deserve life too! You don't kill nothing!"

Photo by Kevin Churchill

...And the Poor get Killed

Continued from page 3

prosecutor wanted the publicity that went with sending a "monster" to its death and sometimes hid valuable evidence showing a doubt of the "monster's" guilt from the court. Almost always, the "monster" had no funds for an appeal or for a transcript of the trial records and was a member of a racial minority despised by the community in which the victim was tried.

This means that the family of the executed person was almost always poor also, which made them victims, too. A good example of this is the case of a former Black Panther, Shabaka Waglini, who was born as Joseph Green Brown in Charleston, South Carolina. He was convicted in 1973 of the robbery, rape and murder of a Tampa white woman. A juror at his trial sent an affidavit to his minister asserting that a jury member had insisted on death for the accused because, "That nigger's been nothing but trouble since he came down here, and he'll be trouble until we get him off the streets."

Fifteen hours before his scheduled execution, a three-judge panel of the federal circuit court of appeals in Atlanta stayed the execution on grounds that the case required further examination.

In his own words Shabaka Waglini wrote: "I had a court-appointed attorney because I didn't have the money to hire one. He was just three years out of law school and had only tried three previous cases before a jury, and none of them were capital cases.

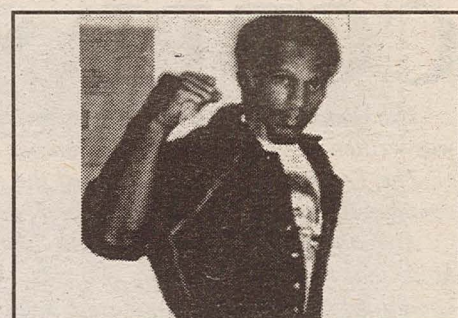
"...the Legal Defense Fund in New York...found another attorney for me...

"When he read the transcript of my trial, he was astounded by the injustices he saw....

"When my death warrant was signed by Governor Graham in 1983, my mother suffered a heart attack and stroke. Today she is still paralyzed from that stroke...I tried to tell her that these people would never kill me, and it was something I had to believe...

"We got the stay...the ballistic reports from the FBI showed the bullet that was taken from the body did not physically match the chamber of the gun that I had...We had the report of the medical examiner first on the scene, and this report said that the assailants had blood groups AB and B. I am type A. The state knew this and also knew the time of death was fixed at between 5:30 and 8:00 in the evening.

At the trial, the state maintained the crime took place around noon. We also found out from inmates that the key witness who testified not only didn't know about the crime but was taught and trained by the police and prosecution. He was taken out of jail every day and led around the scene of the crime, shown pictures of where the body lay, and everything....



Courtesy of Doret Kollerer

Ajamu Nassor was murdered by the State of Indiana 8 December 1994

"I have more respect for the Nazis than I do for Americans. At least the Nazis had the courage to say, 'I'm going to kill you, you and you because I don't like the color of your eyes, the color of your hair, or skin.' They didn't give you a fair trial, the right to appeal, and all the mockery and trickery that we have. What makes us any different?

"[People say], 'If someone kills your mother, shouldn't they answer



Courtesy of Death Penalty Focus

Death Row inmates: More than 90 percent of those on Death Row were financially unable to hire an attorney to represent them at trial.

for it with capital punishment?' And I always respond with, 'What if it were your mother who killed my mother? Would you still be for capital punishment?' I get no response to this question. Capital punishment not only has hurt me, but it has hurt my family....

"In 1970 my brother Willie needed a kidney transplant. He lived in Georgia and the doctors contacted me and came to Florida's state prison. I was examined and our kidneys matched perfectly. State officials in Tallahassee said that I could not be transported because of security reasons. The doctors then said they would bring Willie up to Gainesville, Florida, which is located twenty-two miles from the prison. Again I was denied the right to go and give my kidney. Nine days later, Willie died because he didn't have a kidney transplant. So, in a sense the state of Florida killed my brother. They killed him."

Perhaps the black poet Langston Hughes had such a case in mind when he wrote:

**That justice is a blind goddess
Is a thing to which
we poor are wise:
Her bandage hides
two festering sores
That once, perhaps, were eyes.**

Excerpts from an Interview with Lydia Wallace by Commemorator Editor Melvin Dickson:

"Just from visiting him in prison and talking to him about gatherings, rallies, and all that stuff that goes on, Mumia has not wavered one bit about how he feels about this government, this system. And he's still teaching us. Even in prison, he's telling us things that we need to look at, things that we need to examine for ourselves and evaluate for ourselves and see how the system moves. My family are very quiet; I think Mumia will probably be the only radical we produce. But this experience is enough for us to say, when we succeed, not if we succeed, in getting him out of jail, we do not want to go through this again. We know that this will save our sons. Because he's fighting this fight for all of us. And I have two sons. I don't know if I could weather it like my mother did.

So I would just like to say that Mumia is still there, he's still strong, and he's an example just for me alone. I'm not a speaker; I'm not a radical, but whatever I've got to do, that's what I'm going to do."

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CCBPP STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party (CCBPP) is committed to the goals of the Black Panther Party (BPP) as outlined in its Ten Point Program which was written in 1966 by the Black Panther Party founders, Dr. Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale.

The Ten Point Program outlined the goals and objectives toward changing conditions of economic exploitation and political oppression in all low-income and working communities of the U.S. and elsewhere, as the basis for unity and solidarity.

Also, the CCBPP is committed to the concept of Revolutionary Intercommunalism, introduced by Dr. Newton in 1970 at Boston College. Revolutionary Intercommunalism holds that there are basically two sides. On one side there is Reactionary Intercommunalism which presently holds the world's low-income and working communities under conditions of economic exploitation and political oppression by controlling the wealth, resources and institutions in order to maximize profits for the few. Huey identified this side as the leading reactionary side (that of the ruling class) which consists of a minority, fewer than five percent of the world population. Under these conditions, reactionary intercommunalism, by and large, keeps the poor and working communities on a cycle of degradation, under conditions of reaction, desperation and poverty, with no end in sight. Newton understood that in order to change these conditions and advance the economic and cultural interests of these oppressed communities of the world, disciplined organizations must be built from the bottom up, enabling these low-income and working communities to fight exploitation and oppression by any means necessary (this fight needs to start in the advanced industrialized U.S. because our nation leads the world in political reaction and economic exploitation).

CCBPP advances and upholds the goals which the BPP outlined in its Ten Point Program, and those goals are about ridding black ghettos and low-income and working communities of economic exploitation and political oppression, understanding that we can reach these goals only by seizing the time at the point of practice.

Black Panther Party 10-Point Program

WHAT WE WANT, WHAT WE BELIEVE

1. WE WANT FREEDOM. WE WANT POWER TO DETERMINE THE DESTINY OF OUR BLACK AND OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES. We believe that Black and oppressed people will not be free until we are able to determine our destinies in our own communities ourselves, by fully controlling all the institutions that exist in our communities.

2. WE WANT FULL EMPLOYMENT FOR OUR PEOPLE. We believe that the federal government is responsible and obligated to give every person employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the American businessmen will not give full employment, then the technology and means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organize and employ all its people and give a high standard of living.

3. WE WANT AN END TO THE ROBBERY BY THE CAPITALIST OF OUR BLACK AND OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES. We believe that the racist government has robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules. Forty acres and two mules were promised 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of Black people. We will accept the payment in currency that will be distributed to our many communities. The American racist has taken part in the slaughter of over fifty million Black people. Therefore, we feel this is a modest demand that we make.

4. WE WANT DECENT HOUSING, FIT FOR THE SHELTER OF HUMAN BEINGS. We believe that if the landlords will not give decent housing to our Black and oppressed communities, then housing and the land should be made into cooperatives so that the people in our communities, with government aid, can build and make decent housing for the people.

5. WE WANT EDUCATION FOR OUR PEOPLE THAT EXPOSES THE TRUE NATURE OF THIS DECADENT AMERICAN SOCIETY. WE WANT EDUCATION THAT TEACHES US OUR TRUE HISTORY AND OUR ROLE IN THE PRESENT-DAY SOCIETY. We believe in an educational system that will give to our people a knowledge of self. If you do not have knowledge of yourself and your position in the society and the world, then you will have little chance to know anything else.

6. WE WANT COMPLETELY FREE HEALTH CARE FOR ALL BLACK AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE. We believe that the government must provide, free of charge, for the people, health facilities that will not only treat our illnesses, most of which have come about because of our oppression, but will also develop preventive medical programs to guarantee our future survival. We believe that mass health education and research programs must be developed to give all Black and oppressed people access to advanced scientific and medical information, so we may provide ourselves with proper medical attention and care.

7. WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO POLICE BRUTALITY AND MURDER OF BLACK PEOPLE, OTHER PEOPLE OF COLOR, ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLE INSIDE THE UNITED STATES. We believe that the racist and fascist government of the United States uses its domestic enforcement agencies to carry out its program of oppression against Black people, other people of color, and poor people inside the United States. We

believe it's our right, therefore, to defend ourselves against such armed forces and that all Black and oppressed people should be armed for self-defense of our homes and communities against these fascist police forces.

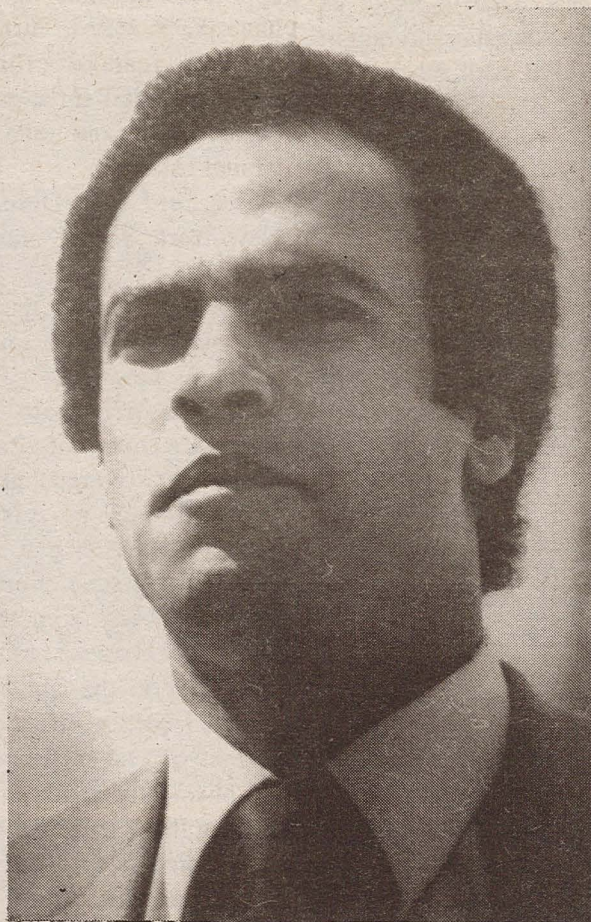
8. WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO ALL WARS OF AGGRESSION. We believe that the various conflicts that exist around the world stem directly from the aggressive desires of the U.S. ruling circle and government to force its domination upon the oppressed people of the world. We believe that if the U.S. government or its lackeys do not cease these aggressive wars that it is the right of the people to defend themselves by any means necessary against their aggressors.

9. WE WANT FREEDOM FOR ALL BLACK AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE NOW HELD IN U.S. FEDERAL, STATE, COUNTY, CITY, AND MILITARY PRISONS AND JAILS. WE WANT TRIALS BY A JURY OF PEERS FOR ALL PERSONS CHARGED WITH SO-CALLED CRIMES UNDER THE LAWS OF THIS COUNTRY. We believe that the many Black and poor oppressed people now held in U.S. prisons and jails have not received fair and impartial trials under a racist and fascist judicial system and should be free from incarceration. We believe in the

ultimate elimination of all wretched, inhuman penal institutions, because the masses of men and women imprisoned inside the United States or by the U.S. military are the victims of oppressive conditions that are the real cause of their imprisonment. We believe that when persons are brought to trial that they must be guaranteed, by the United States, juries of their peers, attorneys of their choice and freedom from imprisonment while awaiting trials.

10. WE WANT LAND, BREAD, HOUSING, EDUCATION, CLOTHING, JUSTICE, PEACE AND PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY CONTROL OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY. When, during human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands that have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their

safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.



Black Panther Founder, Dr. Huey P. Newton

Movie Review

Continued from page 11

all these programs when there are many which strive a small portion of the same. The movie never really even alludes to the Panthers' belief that poverty is the cause of society's ills and that the government's role is to keep the people complacent in their impoverished state and to keep them contained.

Undoubtedly, *Panther* would have been more powerful had it fully explored the ten point program. Instead, it flashes a few scenes which give the viewer only a glance at what was happening aside from the tensions between Panthers and police.

I admit that even though the viewer had to strain to hear the last six points due to the movies background commotion, the movie *did* attempt to make the ten point program known. Instead of using the ten point program as an introduction into the movie, thereby setting its tone, or as a conclusionary statement at the end of the movie replacing the flash of drug statistics which basically reduces its message of the movie to a "just say 'no' to drugs" endorsement.

Some of the one/dimensionalism that affects the plot of the movie also seems to be an affliction the characters suffer from. It is ironic that the character with the most development is the fictitious character, Judge (Kadeem Hardison), who is also the narrator of the movie. Bobby Seale (Courtney B. Vance),

seems to be in a position of authority; however, there is very little to justify why he was more significant to the movement than the fictitious character Tyrone (Bokeem Woodbine). Eldridge Cleaver seems to appear mysteriously, help the Panthers in the production of their paper, initiate a shoot-out with the police, then disappear again. Huey P. Newton (Marcus Chong) is portrayed as an obvious leader; however, *Panther* never truly establishes what made Huey a good leader. It never delves into his education, theoretical brilliance, personal courage and political background. It never reflects the importance of his family's influence and support. Without them, unknowing viewer will never really understand the importance of these events in shaping the development of the BPP. As he is portrayed in the movie, Huey is reduced to a man with very little substance even though he was a complex and charismatic genius. To do justice to the movement, *Panther* would first have to do justice to the people and organization that inspired it.

Despite some of the flaws present in *Panther*, it is an accomplishment that the movie in no way attacks the BPP. Through its depiction of some historically accurate events, the movie does put forth an effort to tell the story. In doing so, it will hopefully rekindle an interest in the BPP, and lead viewers to seek published material (much of which will be available in reprint) that fully explores the revolutionary movement and the people who define it.

Native American

Continued from page 11

a distribution point for cocaine in the United States of America.

Unable to ask local, state, or national "law enforcement" agencies for support or assistance and when his life and that of his family had been threatened, he felt isolated and scared. Finally, in a last ditch effort, Hatcher occupied the *Robesonian* newspaper to bring *public attention* to his plight in fear that he would soon be dead.

He made no attempts at theft or intimidation, but made only four demands: "That the Sheriff's Department of Robeson County and the local judicial system be fully investigated; that the mysterious deaths of Indians and Blacks in Robeson County be fully investigat-

ed; and that Eddie Hatcher and Timothy Jacobs not be turned over to local authorities." He made no personal demands for amnesty or pardons, just that the truth be told.

After peacefully surrendering to authorities one month later, on March 1, the state kidnapping charges against him were dismissed by the state, in favor of the continuing federal prosecution. On October 14, seven months later, he faced a jury trial in Robeson County, and after only five hours of deliberation, the jury of 12 intelligent people from different areas and both white and African Americans delivered a verdict of not guilty of all counts. Yet the state later re-indicted Eddie on the same charges and received a conviction. Although he was a first time offender, he received an 18 year sentence of which he has currently served six years.

Hatcher has a history of grassroots
Continued on page 20

Death Penalty

Continued from page 3

use their power to divert millions of dollars from critical public services to their private bank accounts.

These examples could fill hundreds of books but, the point is that these kinds of criminals, white collar criminals, have the most to lose and would be most influenced by the threat of a death penalty.

Would any state in this country or the federal government permit anyone but the very poorest, mostly Blacks, of course, to be executed? It should be obvious to everyone by now that both hanging and electrocution are forms of torture and are direct violations of the Eighth Amendment's prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment. The wealthy upper class of this country definitely want to keep the Bill of Rights immersed in the sewer until its barnacle encrusted.

In fact, the attitudes of the Power Elite in this country is that the poor are usually not as valuable as pigs and have seen to it that no wealthy person, of any color, has ever gone through the ordeal of judicial murder in the U.S.

The search for a more "humane" way to kill people continued. It has long been thought that killing some-

one in a dark alley is very inhumane and that killing them publicly in broad day light in cold blood is more humane. The humaneness of this escapes me. It occurs to me that perhaps it would be more "humane" for prison official Christians to sneak into the victim's cell in the dark of night when he/she is asleep (perhaps from strong sleeping pills slipped into his dinner) and beat his/her brains out with a huge leather bound bible inside a strong canvas bag so that they could later claim that they only chastised him with the "word of God."

In fact, since criminals are defined by society's economic-elite who influence the making and enforcement of laws, who hire killers (executioners) to do the killing for them and hire technicians to devise the most efficient manner of killing, it is an easy step to start criminalizing and killing more groups that they consider obstacles to their ability to make profits. The German Nazis criminalized and killed people who were considered by their industrial benefactors as a drain on society, the gypsies, Jehovah Witnesses, mentally ill people, and others who were considered a liability. Therefore, any society dominated and motored by the pursuit of capital via profits and property with the death penalty as law is always in danger.

Privatization

Continued from page 15

uct. While a few well-equipped entrepreneurs are getting rich, the majority of the population is being stripped to bare subsistence. Efforts to become more self-sufficient in food are being destroyed, leaving the poorest continent in the world increasingly dependent upon the import-export market merely to eat.

In one of Malcolm X's last speeches before he was murdered, delivered in Rochester, N.Y., February 16, 1965, Malcolm pointed out that, "As long as your problem is fought within the American context, all you can get as allies is fellow Americans. As long as you call it civil rights, it's a domestic problem within the jurisdiction of the United States government. But 'human rights' is part of the charter of the United Nations. So one of the first steps that we became involved in, those of us who got into the Organization of Afro-American Unity, was to come up with a program that would make our grievances international and make the world see that our problem was no longer a Negro problem or an American problem but a human problem. A problem which should be attacked by all elements of humanity. A problem that was so complex that it was impossi-

ble for Uncle Sam to solve it himself and therefore we want to get into a body or conference with people who are in such positions that they can help us get some kind of adjustment for this situation before it gets so explosive that no one can handle it."

At that time Africa burned with a white-hot flame of independence from European colonialism. This was a cause for great hope, but as Malcolm X also pointed out, the colonial powers didn't leave, they passed the ball, just like they were playing a game of basketball, they passed the ball to the United States. (Then they got back into the game themselves). Privatization internationally is the tool of the 1980s and 1990s to hold back the hopes of the oppressed people of the world for a future that would offer no profit to the exploiter, and would bring control of the economic means of the earth to the people who labor to produce it. Privatization in the United States is the latest tool in the long fight by international monopolies to take back everything won by poor, working and minority peoples during the 1930s, and the 1960s, and to deny us the real gains that neither the trade union movement nor the civil rights movement succeeded in delivering, and which, now, we must have if we mean to survive into the next century.

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Native American

Continued from page 19

activism on behalf of people of color and poor whites in Robeson County, North Carolina. Before his incarceration he had been investigating over 20 unsolved murders that were believed to be drug related in this rural county.

About six hours into the takeover of the *Robesonian*, a caller identifying himself as Randolph Scott nervously offered to provide evidence of major corruption involving Robeson County officials. . . He asked that it be done secretly because he could be killed. Several weeks later Mr. Randolph Scott was found dead from multiple stab wounds.

Assistant U.S. Attorney John Bruce called Leon Hamilton, Lifestyles Editor of the *Robesonian* and hostage, at Hatcher's trial to testify he knew Randolph Scott, they had been neighbors, he did not believe that Randolph Scott would have any knowledge of corruption by Robeson county officials.

In May 1992, the Lumberton police department, an agency not tightly tied to Robeson County's Sheriff Hubert Stone, arrested and charged Leon Hamilton with a second degree sexual offense. The Lumberton Police Task Force uncovered a web of alleged criminal activity involving Leon Hamilton. During the search of Hamilton's home, the task force seized countless boxloads of homemade pornographic videos, 16 and 35 mm. films, pictures, negatives, and most importantly, computer equipment, software and diaries. On some of the videos and films was none other than Randolph Scott. Also, Mr. John Paul, who had been "missing" for quite a long time is one of the individuals identified on some of the tapes.

Hatcher is a political prisoner and is acknowledged as one internationally. Twice his case has been presented to the United Nation's Human Rights conference in Switzerland. Each time the delegation has voted in support of Hatcher and issued declarations of support. Additionally, he is recognized as a political prisoner by the North Carolina, National, and World Council of Churches.

Hatcher and the community he fought for won a small victory in 1994 when a yearlong battle blocked Robeson County Sheriff Hubert Stone from gaining the appointment to U.S. Marshall. Congressman Charlie Rose who sponsored Stone's nomination acknowledged on February 22, 1994, that "some of the allegations leveled against Stone by Eddie Hatcher are causing some folks in the White House to get concerned with the nomination of Stone to the U.S. Marshall position." Stone was rejected by the Clinton Administration, even though Rose as well as North Carolina Speaker of the House Dan Blue and North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt were lobbying on Stone's behalf.

"Before February 1, 1988, I had

worked as a registered nurse in emergency departments for 22 years," said Hatcher's mother, Thelma Clark. "Within two months after the takeover of the *Robesonian* Newspaper by my son, I experienced the most rude awakening that any human being, any citizen of the United States, could ever experience. I experienced what I had heard about in other countries where people are persecuted and condemned by the government without due process for speaking out against the government."

Hatcher grew up in rural Richmond County, North Carolina. He was by all accounts an ideal child and in grammar school the teachers always spoke highly of him. As most kids his age, he played games like baseball, he always had a keen interest in reading and learning. He was also very involved in the church and when he was 15 began playing gospel piano. In addition to good standing at school and in church, Hatcher respected his parents and was never a trouble maker of any sort. "He was very good, out of the three children I've had, Eddie has never been a problem," according to Ms. Clark.

When he was a teenager, Hatcher developed an interest in government and political science. A very personal side to Hatcher's teenage politicization was the violent death of his father when he was one. Hatcher's father died of a gunshot wound which was dismissed as being a suicide without any thorough investigation of other causes. The Hatcher family was outraged; they had too many reasons to believe it wasn't a suicide. A single mother of three, Mrs. Clark knew that there should have been a more critical investigation but "we didn't have money to hire an attorney, so..."

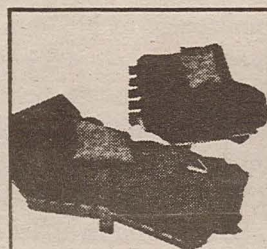
All those who feel a miscarriage of justice has taken place, should call, write, or *fax* the governor, the parole commission and the speaker of the North Carolina house and ask why Eddie Hatcher is being held in NC prison while corporate/government drug dealers, child molesters, and murderers are being paroled. Ask why the government has led such a battle of persecution against Eddie Hatcher and his family.

Governor Jim Hunt
Office of the Governor:
Raleigh, NC 27603
T-919-733-4240
F-919-733-2120
NC Parole Commission
831 W. Morgan St.
Raleigh, NC 27603
T-919-733-3414
F-919-733-8440
Rep. Harold J. Brubaker
State Legislative Bldg.
Raleigh, NC 27611
T-919-733-5936

To write to Eddie or for more information contact: The Eddie Hatcher Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1491, Hamlet, NC 28345. Tel and fax (910) 582-0017. Or Eddie Hatcher, 900 Coble Ave., Albermarle, NC 28001.

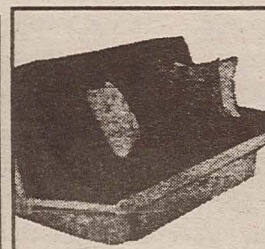
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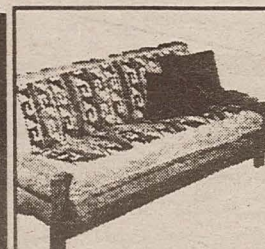
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clam bed

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Full \$179
Queen \$199



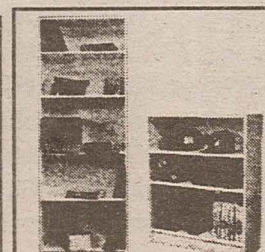
the cal convertible

w/6" cotton futon
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Queen \$219



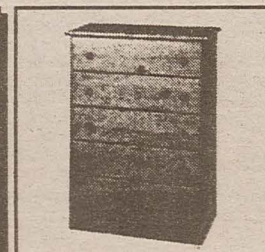
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Coffee Table \$20



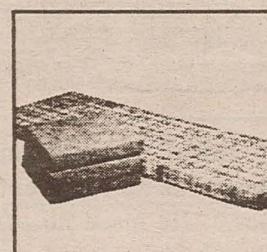
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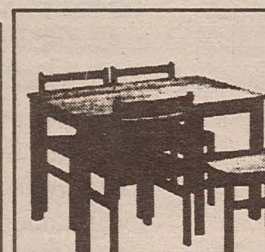
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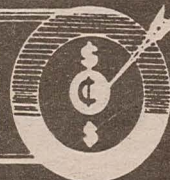
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